24

Order 5 Novr /83 No. 2126

Say/ This report, with the previous one, which was disposed of on the 17th Sept ulto, will now be printed as ~~[illegible]~~ "Confidential": copies of both being forwarded to the Govt of India, who are known to have the subject of Emigration to the Straits Settlts & ~~protected~~ States protected by the Straits Settlts Govt under their consideration. H. E. the G. in C. believes that there is much in these two reports from Lt Col. Fischer which the G. of India will be glad to have an opportunity of perusing.

D.M. 11/10/83.

To G. Lt Col. Fischer 3 copies Despd 15/11

No. 2127.

51 copies Despd 15/11

Emigration (1883) Department.

From
The British Consular Agent
Karikal

No. 708.

No. 3020

Dated 29 } Sept. 1883
Read }

No.

Subject

Has the honor to submit the second part of his Report on his recent tour on special Duty through the Straits Settlements.

CHIEF SECRETARY
3 OCT 83
GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

desire to [illegible]

of fresh air upon an ordinary ventilator or two. If they ~~was~~ were ill, if they ~~are~~ were sick, if they ~~have~~ wished to answer the calls of nature, if they wanted fresh water. . . . . tant pis pour ~~[illegible]~~ Eux!

They ~~cannot~~ could not come upon deck. They ~~must~~ had to satisfy or stifle their wants or desires as they ~~can~~ could! This occurred, for a short time, on three or four occasions during our voyage to Karikal; and so little did some of the Officers on board consider that any hardship was involved thereby that they kept the hatches battened down longer than was actually necessary. Luckily there were not more than 260 passengers on board; and it was most fortunate that their number was thus accidentally limited: for before we reached Negapatam we ran short of water. And yet I am ashamed to say that this vessel has been known to carry 1400 passengers from Bengal to Burma — "put on board", so Captain Budd her Commander told me, "by the Government Officer himself"!

9. It now remains for me to record my grateful acknowledgments to His Excellency Sir Frederick Weld for his cordial reception of myself as the Representative of the Madras Government, and for the facilities so generously afforded to me by his Government for seeing as much as possible of the Straits Settlements. I have also to thank the Hon. Mr Irving, the Acting Colonial Secretary, for his constant courtesy and ever ready assistance; while the hearty welcome extended to us by Sir Hugh Low, the Resident of Perak, and his earnest desire to show us his State as it really exists will ever

remain among the most gratifying recollections of a journey that was pregnant with the freshest and most inspiriting impressions. To the Hon. Major McNair, the Acting Lieutenant Governor of Penang, my own personal obligations are very great indeed, for constant acts of unremitting kindness and for the thoroughly hearty manner in which he placed his own large experience at my disposal whenever I chose to draw upon it; and I feel that had not Mr Macgregor, the Protector of Indian Immigrants, so unreservedly and so unselfishly put himself and his time at my service I should have been wanting, at the present moment, in a good deal of useful knowledge. I have already recorded the debt of gratitude we owe the Hon. Mr Maxwell for the cordial co-operation he afforded us in the consideration of our Draft Ordinance, and in the preparation of our Joint Note, and to Mr Sneyd Kynnersley, the Senior Magistrate of Penang, for the help that we derived from ~~[illegible]~~ him in the same circumstances; ~~Sneyd Kynnersley, the Senior Magistrate of Penang;~~ but it is pleasant to repeat once more our acknowledgments to the three distinguished Officers of the Straits Settlements Government who so heartily lent us their help in the good work we went there to accomplish.

I have the honor to be
Sir,
Your Most obedient Servant

Bowness Fischer
British Consular Agent, Karikal

Meenatchy, under the command of Captain Menzell, had proved so wonderful a success and had opened out such wide possibilities in the future that Mr. Hütten-bach, the Head of the House of Katz Brothers, who had been much trammelled by his relations "with their Dutch friends at Batavia", resolved to shake off this obstruction and to start afresh on a scale that better commended itself to his bold and enterprising spirit. Meanwhile their temporary retirement is looked upon as a misfortune and is much lamented by thousands of natives along this coast: for it might have been said of Messrs. Katz Brothers — and in this case *parva licet componere magnis* — as the *Pall Mall Gazette* very recently said of the German Empire: "Such a supremacy as that which the *Meanatchy* enjoyed, almost unprecedented in itself, was altogether unprecedented in the fashion in which it was exercised." There was no doubt whatever about the supremacy of the *Meanatchy*: no other steamer along this coast could touch her in speed; none could equal her in the thorough comfort of her accomoda-tion; while on no other vessel could native passengers have been treated with more thoughtful care and kindness by everyone on board from the Captain to the last cook-boy. As for her commander (who traced his descent from one of the old Danish Vikings) he was not only *facile ~~[illegible]~~ princeps* as a sailor, but was also a polished and high-minded gentleman, while he was endowed with a talent for business that amounted almost to genius; and as he was given *carte blanche* by Mr

Hüttenbach

Hüttenbach (who had learnt to appreciate a kindred spirit in many a stirring adventure together during the late Acheen war) he carried everything before him. Instead, however, of using the ascendency they had thus acquired to enhance their profits, Mr. Hüttenbach on the contrary, became more generous to the traders with whom he had business relations and more liberal to the native passengers. The comfort and convenience of every one were assiduously ameliorated voyage after voyage; and voyage after voyage Captain Menzell took over to the Straits Settlements and brought back thence numbers of infirm or indigent natives who had not the means of paying for their passage and whom he entertained free of all expense to themselves. This benevolent liberality was a wise policy: it enhanced a thousand fold the local reputation of the *Meanatchy*; and ~~[illegible]~~ one consequence of it was seen in the fact that when Captain Menzell arrived at Negapatam, last month, *en route* to Europe, he was accorded an ovation that many a popular proconsul might well have envied, both for its thorough heartiness and its genuine spontaneity. But to ~~the~~ return to the ~~[illegible]~~ *Shahzada*. She was nothing more than what is familiarly termed "a cargo boat", of about 1045 tons, steaming, under the most favourable circumstances — and she could not possibly have had better weather than we enjoyed — only nine knots an hour. She was so low in the water that if the slightest squall ruffled the sea the hatches had to be battened down; and the unfortunate passengers between decks, in a darkness only made visible by the dim port-lights, were dependent for their supply of

26 of the British Guiana Ordinance, No. 4 of 1876; and I am inclined to agree with him. He also suggests that the record of an immigrants' absence without leave should be endorsed on the back of his contract; and recommended as a model for such instruments the contracts he executes with ~~the~~ his Chinese coolies. Besides the 1600 Indian immigrants on the Batu Kawan Estate there are also 700 Chinese coolies; and the form of contract made with the latter is rather remarkable. It only allows them to be ill for two days in every month, and binds each cooly, in the event of his being absent for more than two days *per mensem*, to forfeit to his *Kongsee*, or boarding-house, a sum of eight cents *per diem*, the cost of his daily diet. These contracts are generally made for one year; and the coolies are obliged by them to work for 360 continuous days, *sans rémission*. Mr. Vermont, however, showed me another alternative form of contract; and, as an indication of the inclinations of the planting community on this subject, it seems worthy of reproduction. It occurred in a local *cause célèbre*, *Lamb v. Kathen, Aroney, and others*; and ran as follows: "It is this day mutually agreed on between Mr. James Lamb, Manager of Prye Estate, and the undersigned Kling" (that is to say *Madrassee*) "laborers as follows:— We the undersigned laborers do hereby promise and agree to work on the Prye Estate or on any of Messrs. Brown *& Co's* Estates for a period of three hundred and sixty-five (365) working days each and every one of us; to obey diligently and to the best of our power all lawful commands of the aforesaid Manager and his

subordinates and to be careful of all tools, implements, &c entrusted to our care. For and in consideration of the labor to be so rendered, the said Manager, on his part, promises to pay unto Mill-men, Battery and Fire men at the rate of fifteen (15) cents of a dollar for each and every day's work, as is customary working at night; to cane boatmen, field laborers, and to all those able to work in the No. 1 Gang fourteen cents (14) for each and every day's work; No. 2. Planting Gang Eleven (11) cents and boys ten (10) cents of a dollar for each and every day's work. As earnest money each and every one of us on signing this Agreement have received from the said Manager an advance of three dollars; which said advance is to be deducted from the wages accruing to us. This Agreement to come into force from the 1st day of January 1874".

8. This was the last opportunity I had of seeing and talking with Mr. Vermont: about thirty six hours after I left Batu Kawan I was on my way back to India in the steamer ~~[illegible]~~ *Shahzada*. The ~~[illegible]~~ *Shahzada* was one of the small fleet of the Asiatic Steam Navigation Company, and had been temporarily chartered by Messrs. Katz Brothers to take the place of the *Meanatchy* which they had sold to the Netherlands Company "with a view" (so said their circular notice) "of building new ships on their own account better suited and arranged for any trade they may think proper to engage in hereafter". The fact is that the twenty-one voyages made by the

his explanations on those parts of them that seemed to me doubtful. And on the whole I had reason to be satisfied with what I thus saw and heard. I was much struck, however, by the large number of absentees on his Estate; and he assured me that a similar state of affairs prevailed throughout the Province. Mr. Vermont has, altogether, on his Estate about 1600 Madras coolies, including women and children; but of this number not more than 963 were mustered at roll-call. On examining the roll-call-book, I found that, out of this working remnant of 963 coolies, 280 had been absent on the day preceding my visit; and further examination convinced me that this was not an unusual occurrence. Mr. Vermont said that he was thus obliged to allow for at least 25 per cent of his coolies being absent every day; and urged this fact as the chief reason why the Planters should be granted larger latitude in dealing, themselves, with such cases: for, as he went on to remark, if they were to follow the strict letter of the law and prosecute their coolies for being absent in the manner insisted on by the existing Ordinance all work would be at a stand-still, and the whole of their time would be absorbed in going to and fro between their plantations and the Police Court. "And how", he asked, speaking for his own Estate, "would the Magistrate like this? He visits Bukit Tamboon, across the Batu Kawan river, for a few hours once a week; and how long would it take him to dispose of the accumulated cases of one week at the rate of 280 a day?" To meet this state of affairs Mr. Vermont suggests the adoption of Sections 24, 25, and

further proof were wanted, how minute and thorough is the care exercised in this institution. There were 80 Chinamen and 1 Madrassee in the hospital when we visited it, all of them in different stages of leprosy; and though the gurjun oil régime has been unremittingly followed, every morning and evening, for the last two years not a single cure has, so far been effected.

7. The day following my visit to Pulo Jeja I went over once more to Batu Kawan, in Province Wellesley. My object in so doing was not only to see what attention had been paid to the suggestions I had made on my first visit, twenty days previously, but to cultivate still more intimately the acquaintance of Mr. Vermont, who, it will be remembered, was unavoidably absent from his Estate on the occasion of my inspection of it with Mr. Macgregor. Apart from this Mr. Vermont had taken a leading part in the meeting of the 17th of July, and appeared to be put forward by the Planters of Province Wellesley as their representation and spokesman; and it became my duty therefore to try to know more of him. My intentions, however, were but partially fulfilled. Shortly after my arrival at Batu Kawan, Mr. Vermont received news of the sudden death, on the previous day, of Mr. Presgrave, an old friend of thirty years' standing; and as the funeral was to take place at George Town on the same evening it necessitated his abrupt departure. Before he left, however, I had a long, quiet talk with him on Emigration matters in general; and was afforded the opportunity of a leisurely examination of his books and of hearing

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6. The day after my return to Penang I accompanied Mr. Macgregor and Doctor Hampshire, the senior Medical Officer of the Settlement, on one of their joint periodical visits to the Leper Hospital in the neighbouring island of Pulo Jeraja. This hospital, which is a perfect model of its kind, is pleasantly situated within a few yards of the sea shore in an enclosure entirely belonging to itself; and is in charge of an apothecary, under the direct supervision of Doctor Hampshire, who evinces the keenest concern in the welfare of its inmates, whom he visits at least once a week. And as a submarine telephone connects the hospital with his own office in George Town his interest in it is incessantly maintained. Everything in fact that constant care and watchful forethought can do to ensure the well-being of the patients seem here almost to touch perfection. The building, which is constructed on the ridge-roof principle, is vast and spacious, without any pompous outward pretensions. The wards are fresh and cool, and each a wonder in its way of cleanliness and comfort; and a system of inward communication runs throughout them which, while it contributes casually to ventilation, enables the apothecary when seated at his table to see from end to end of the hospital. At the back of the hospital are some moveable latrines, the invention, unless I am much mistaken, of Doctor Hampshire himself, which show, if

of tying up and flogging their coolies whenever they seemed to be refractory; but he urged in extenuation of this practice, that they were "obliged" thus to take the law into their own hands as the nearest magistrate to them was more than forty miles distant. Mr. Charles de Mornay also afforded much evidence as to the general hospitality of the Dutch planters during the time he lived in Deli; and told rather a dramatic story of a certain veritable Dutchman who, unable to make a cooly understand what he wanted done, deliberately took down his gun and fired at him as the poor wretch, terrified by the bluster of his master, was trying to escape from him! And I may mention, *par parenthèse* that it was the remembrance of these stories, added to others I had heard elsewhere, which made me so earnestly insist, when subsequently talking with the Consul of Netherlands India, that Deli should be visited and thoroughly ~~[illegible]~~ inspected by some competent and duly authorized representative of our own Government. But this by the way. We left Malakoff about 2 p.m. for Bertam, six miles distant; and visited the Government hospital there, a remarkably clean, commodious and thoroughly well ventilated building. Here Dr. McClosky showed me a noteworthy case of nostalgia — "a recently arrived cooly who was pining away from home-sickness and was both unable and unwilling to work — and another inveterate case of debility: both from Malakoff. The visit to Bertam had taken us somewhat out of our road, and the shades of evening were closing over us when we once more a similar ceremony should not also be extended t the old coolies. Accompanied by Doctor McClosky, Mr. Macgregor walked slowly up and down the tw rows of men and women, examining and noting their general appearance and physique, and stoppi now and then, to listen and talk to those coolies who addresse him, but without actually inviting them to make any complai The immigrants had perfect liberty of speech and action; and took it as freely as I have ever seen any batch of coolie in India indulge in similar recriminations. One man, fo instance, the lawyer, apparently, of his gang, who had been but a few weeks in the Colony, said that he had asked Mr. Charles de Mornay how much of his advance he had yet to repay and that that gentleman merely smiled at him; and, as this complaint induced a laugh, several other coolies of the same batch, following his lead, made a similar statement. Another man complained that he had been hit on the hand, by a chunkul, by another immigrant whom he declared to be "mad"; but who, when interrogated, was able to give a perfectly sane reason for having resented the ill-timed pleasantries of the complainant. These were all the complaints. Before the immigrants were dismissed several men and women expressed the desire to know when their time would be up; and their claims were carefully examined by Mr. Macgregor, in their presence, on our return to the house. Before leaving Malakoff, I elicited some very interesting information from Mr. Charles de Mornay about the Dutch Settlement of Deli, where he had lived on a plantation, from 1872 to 1876. He freely admitted that, when he was there, the planters were in the habit

not surprised to hear from Mr. Charles de Mornay that they were, in his opinion, the most healthy throughout the Province, and that the mortality last year at Malakoff was only .70 per cent. This was the only Estate, too, on which a successful attempt had been made to ~~segregate~~ segregate the new ~~from~~ from the old coolies; and, from what Mr. Charles de Mornay told me, the system seemed to work very satisfactorily — no interference being involved, by this plan, with the domestic arrangements of each separate batch of immigrants. From the Lines we went to the hospital, an attap arrangement on the ground, and the only hospital, in fact, I had seen, in the Province, thus situated. The floor was chunamed, and I was assured that it was, and had always been, thoroughly secure against any incursions of water. Here Doctor McClosky showed me another "bad bargain": a miserable case of inveterate debility, which had been sent over from Negapatam, and had for more than a year resisted every attempt to cure it. The coolies were then summoned, by horn, from their various occupations in the mill and in the fields, and ~~[illegible]~~ mustered for inspection by Mr. Macgregor. There were 250 Ordinance coolies on the rolls of the Estate; but only 205 put in appearance: the remaining 45 being unaccountably absent. When it was proved beyond doubt that the absentees were not anywhere forthcoming, Mr. Macgregor began his inspection; and I am free to confess that it was a most harmless performance, as far as the planter was concerned, and that there seemed no reason why in the Straits. From Butterworth we drove to Malakoff twelve miles distant, over an indifferent road; and arrived there ~~whilst~~ the morning was still young. Malak is an old and rather important plantation, situated in a remote and unfrequented corner towards the north East of Province Wellesley, not far from the River Muda. It covers an extent of over 2600 acres; but only 790 of these are actually under cultivation 600 acre being given up to tapioca and the remaining 190 to cocoanuts. The titular manager of the Estate is Mr Henry de Mornay, an amiable, easy-going, old gentleman between sixty and seventy years of age; but the virtual manager is Mr Charles de Mornay, his eldest son, an active, energetic, and most intelligent young man of about thirty, whose frank, fresh, vigorous character forms quite a pleasant relief to the prevailing drowsiness. Mr Charles de Mornay is further assisted by two younger brothers, who finished their education at Ootacamund, but whose energy and intelligence appeared to be still in the future tense. The mill had stopped working on the previous day; but we were able to witness the various processes of sifting, granulating, drying and packing the tapioca, and it was interesting to watch the thorough heartiness with which the coolies engaged in this occupation performed their tasks. From the mill we walked to the Lines, which were not unlike those I had inspected in other parts of the Province; but they appeared to me to be far more advantageously situated, on higher and drier ground, and I was

5. Leaving these facts to speak for themselves, I revert to my own personal experiences during the remainder of my stay in the Straits Settlements. Owing to unfavourable circumstances, I had, hitherto, been unable to visit the whole of Province Wellesley: I had not seen Butterworth, the magisterial head-quarters of the Province; and I had not visited Malakoff, one of the oldest, and in many respects, most typical of all the local plantations. I found, too, that Mr Macgregor had yet to make his half-yearly inspection of this Estate, and I was glad of an opportunity to accompany him and to see for myself how one of these inspections (about the form of which some of the planters were inclined to complain) was actually conducted. Shortly after day-break, accordingly, on the 1st of last month, I left Penang, in the steam launch, with Mr Macgregor; and half an hour afterwards we landed at Butterworth. At Butterworth we were met by Dr. McCloskey, the Colonial Surgeon, whose duty it is to accompany Mr Macgregor on his inspections. There were not many sick coolies in the Butterworth hospital, and no complaints; but Dr. McCloskey showed me two distressing cases of Epilepsy, from the Malakoff and Caledonia Estates, which were both of more than four months' duration, and threatened, so he said, to be incurable. These were two of the "bad bargains", due to defective supervision on this side of the water, about which the planters had complained to me all through my tour; and the malady had apparently been imported from Negapatam, not contracted in

more was wanted than a mere visitation of certain licensed brothels; and still more probably because the brokers engaged in this filthy profession have, with the skulking ingenuity of their trade, accomodated their transactions to meet the new state of affairs. Be this as it may, on the 7th of last July, Mr. Karl unearthed another hideous case of a young girl, named Amanah, who had been decoyed from Berhampore *by her own brother* and sold by him, for 110 rupees, at Rangoon, to a cigar merchant of Penang, who agreed to keep her for eighteen months and then to send her back. The so-called cigar-merchant, however, seems to have been nothing more than a vile pander: for he brought her to Penang and then took her on, at once "with several other women" to Acheen where he compelled her, by ill-treatment, to prostitute herself. "Driven from Acheen by fever they returned to Penang"; and the case eventually attracted the notice of Mr. Karl, who said, speaking from his deliberate experience, that "*Rangoon seems to be the mart for Indian female infants*", and that "at No 27 Koondjam Bastih, opposite to the hospital" in that town, *there lives a woman called Golabaundoo who makes a constant traffic* of these poor creatures". These girls are taken over, *apud* Mr. Karl, by the steamers of the British India Steam Navigation Company, the Agents of which, so he seems to say, "*decline to enter into any arrangement for giving information when carrying Indian passengers*".

utterly impossible at present to say — are habitually being abducted from this country to ports in British Burma for immoral purposes; and that thence they pass, in ever descending degradation, to the Straits Settlements, to the Malayalan native States, to the Dutch Colonies, to . . . . God only knows where! In connection with this subject, Mr. Macgregor showed me a mass of "minutes" and other official papers which culminated, on the 3rd of last November, in his being appointed, "under the provisions of Section 8 of the Contagious Diseases Ordinance of 1870, to inspect every licensed brothel in Penang in which any of the inmates are natives of India". This correspondence originated in a very painful disclosure made by Mr. Karl, the Assistant Protector of Chinese and the Registrar under the Contagious Diseases Ordinance at Penang, who casually discovered, on the 20th of July last year, that six Telugu girls had been enticed over from Coconada to Penang for immoral purposes, and then taken on by steamer to Acheen. Mr. Karl stated, in his letter, that "poor Indian girls are not only taken to Acheen but also to Deli, Tongkah, and other places", and suggested that it was time that steps were taken to prevent this traffic; and after a very voluminous correspondence, conducted, after the manner of the Straits Settlements Administration, by means of "minutes", Mr. Macgregor was appointed to inspect the brothels of the island of Penang. His appointment, however, has not, so far, been fruitful in results: probably because his powers were limited and because something but to thoroughly examine and to see for himself the real state of affairs in Deli and in the other parts of Sumatra dependent on that Settlement. How far in doing what I thus did I was travelling beyond my brief it is, of course, for Government to decide; but I may plead in extenuation that to have travelled so far and to have come back without endeavouring to do all the good that lay within my reach would have been a misprision of my Duty.

4. During the remainder of my stay at Penang, I acquired much curious information from Mr. Macgregor — who freely placed the entire records of his Office at my disposal — as to the manner in which things were habitually carried on this side of the water: information that justified, over and over again, the unfavourable opinion Mr. Buck had formed when he had visited Negapatam. But as Government have recently decided "to effect very considerable changes in the present system of Emigration to the Straits Settlements" it seems supererogatory to insist any further on these unpleasant facts. It appears, however, imperative that I should bring to notice a most deplorable and disgraceful state of affairs, disclosed by the Records of Mr. Macgregor's Office, with regard to the "free Emigration" to Burma — and this the more especially as the Government of the Straits Settlements, in spite of the most strenuous exertions to do so, seem unable entirely to cope with this evil. It would, appear, then, that young Indian girls — in what numbers it is

been known of planters having been obliged to fly the country, and of others taking refuge from Justice in suicide. Mr. Lavino, of course, knew nothing of the sentiments of his own Government on the subject of Emigration: it never having occurred to them, apparently, that the Indian Government would ever sanction a regularly organized traffic of this kind; and I told him, therefore, that, if the Netherlands Government could guarantee the thorough protection of the coolie, I thought our own Government would willingly subscribe a convention, suggesting, at the same time, that this Convention should follow the lines on which the Anglo-French Convention of 1861 had been constructed. It seemed to me, however, that if the British Consular Agent, whom it would be necessary to send to Deli in the event of such a convention being concluded, were invested with the same powers to try and settle cases between planters and coolies which it is proposed to entrust to Mr. Macgregor in the Straits Settlements, this Convention would be most materially reinforced. So thought Mr. Lavino, who promised to see the Governor General of Netherlands India himself on this subject, to communicate to him our interview, and to let me know the result. In the event of this result being favourable, I suggested that the Netherlands Government should at once address the Government of India, and that they should invite the latter to send over a Representative, not only to confer with the Governor General should have come back without a copy of our note (for there was no means at Penang of reproducing this instrument according to our need of it); and should, in many respects, have left my part of our mission incomplete. It was, therefore, decided by Mr. Buck and myself that I should await the arrival of the next steamer, and should employ the interim in filling up the *lacunæ* that still existed in my impressions. Everything had been so utterly new, at any rate to myself; there had been so much of what Renan calls *l'imprévu*, that our travels had more than once reminded me of the truth of Matthew Arnold's description of the manner in which "we English pursue our business with unslackening stride,

"And see all sights from pole to pole,
"And glance, and nod, and bustle by;
"And never once possess our Soul
"Before we die!"

I was glad, therefore, of the opportunity to stand still, for a time, amidst the scenes I had thus hastily traversed and to see them with a less preoccupied mind.

3. I was extremely anxious at one time of visiting the neighbouring Dutch Settlement of Deli, in the island of Sumatra — that bourne to which so many of our coolies are said to go never to return again! — and this intention was much encouraged by the very courteous and cordial offers of assistance which I received from the Hon. Mr. Vermont (who has several friends amongst the planters there) and from Mr. G. Lavino, the Consul of the Netherlands Government at Penang. But Major McNair thought that, however much I might endeavour to divest this visit of any official character, the fact of being, at the same time, the accredited Representative of the Madras Government in the Straits Settlements would inevitably lead to a misconstruction of my motives; and as Mr. Buck inclined to a similar opinion I abandoned the idea. The day before I finally left Penang, however, I had a long and very interesting interview with Mr. Lavino: for it struck me that one of the crying evils we are so anxious to prevent — namely the illicit emigration of our coolies to the Settlement of Deli — might, possibly, be obviated could we but induce the Government of Netherlands India to make some satisfactory convention with us. Deli, it is, perhaps, necessary to explain, is a Dutch Residency; but the Resident is virtually a Governor and is directly responsible only to the Governor General of Netherlands India in Batavia, from whom he is separated by a journey of about four days. The Settlement is twenty hours' distant from Singapore; and all the Madrassees now resident there are said to have arrived *via* Singapore. The planters, Mr. Lavino says, are a very hetero-geneous collection from most of the European nations, the English, however, predominating; and though it is undoubtedly true that they *have frequently ill*-used their coolies, it is, he assures me, no less true that the punishment meted out to them for such offences has been swift and — so severe, in fact, that instances have

The British Consulate: Karikal.

29th Sept 1883

No. 708.

From
Lieut. Colonel Bowness Fischer, *M. S. C.*
British Consular Agent
Karikal.

To
The Hon. C. Forster Webster
Chief Secretary to Government
with the Governor
Stone House Hill.

Sir,

With reference to G.O. No. 1829, Public, of the 17th instant (which I received on the 25th idem) it has occurred to me, on reflection, that my Report on my recent tour on Special Duty through the Straits Settlements would be wanting in completeness did it end altogether with the departure of Mr Buck from Penang; and I have, therefore, the honor to submit, for the approval of The Right Honourable the Governor in Council, as succinct a narrative as present circumstances (which are rather discouraging) will permit me to furnish, by way of corollary to this Report.

2. On the same day that Mr Buck left for Rangoon one of the five line steamers belonging to Messrs Katz Brothers was leaving Penang for Negapatam; and, as the next alternative to this was a passage by a mere cargo-boat, I was naturally anxious to return by the most comfortable route. Had I done so, however, I

---

immigrants ~~were subjected~~
in the Straits Settlements
were subjected.
(From order)

The British Consulate: Karikal.

1 Oct. 83

My dear Webster,

Réflexion faite, it seemed wrong that my Report should nd with the euthanasia of Buck: for I saw and did a good deal with iting about after Elijah had thus

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No. 708.

From

To

Th

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With re

17th instant (w

occurred to me

recent tour on

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(from order)

Straits Emigration

1829

DISPOSED OF
17th SEP 83
BY G.O. No. 1829 (Mis)

7 A 3020/83

Public Department.

17

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

READ the following *letter*

from the British Consular Agent. Karikal. d/1 Sep 83. No 663.

Order. 17 Sep./83 No. 1829 Mi
2d Hon.

The Governor in Council has perused these papers with much interest. ~~and~~

~~2. He~~ observes that ~~matters seem to have improved~~, with Indian coolies, in the Straits. If unremitting inspection is maintained to see that the rules laid down are strictly followed, there is no cause to fear a relapse to the state of things which were disclosed in 1874 regarding the ill-treatment to which

The condition of the Indian cooly in the Straits Settlements ~~would~~ appears to have ~~[illegible]~~ greatly improved ~~within~~ of late ~~recent years~~. The principal aim ~~of~~ in the future will be to ~~secure~~ insist that the ~~regulations~~ now to be laid down are ~~strictly~~ scrupulously carried out. To secure this object a system of vigilant and unremitting inspection will be necessary, ~~and~~, if this be provided ~~for~~, there would seem to be no reason to fear a recurrence of the state of things first brought to light in 1874.

SN 14/9

JW 14

DESPATCHED 20 SEP

Straits Emigration

FOR ORDERS.

Hon. Mr. Carmichael

11

Public DEPARTMENT.

No. 2736.

From The British Consular Agent Karikal dated 1 Sept 1883 No 663 —

FOR ORDERS.

F.W. 9/ E.St. 7.9.83.

Very amusing & interesting — but when printed (if at all) a good deal will have to be cut out.

Matters seem to be better in the Straits with our coolies: and if there is unceasing inspection to see that the Rules laid down are followed, we need have no fear — But that there is the greatest danger, where inspection is lax — see the shocking disclosures in our Procs of July/76.

F.G. 11/9/3

DESPATCHED

Pub 2736/1/83

X2

by the Government of India

40. Indian labour may be introduced in these States in future as freely as into the Colony on the understanding that all regulations introduced into the Ordinance to be in force in the Colony affecting the Statute labourer shall be carried out under the directions of the Resident and his officers and that the Government of the Straits Settlements will guarantee that this is done.

41. The powers of the Indian Immigration Agent appointed by the Madras Government will extend to the Protected Native States as well as to the Colony.

(Signed) J. F. A. McNair

C. E. Buck

Bowness Fischer

W. E. Maxwell

C. W. Sneyd Kynnersley

Government Office: Penang
26th July 1883

(True Copy)

The Consulate: Rankal
1st Sept. 1883

Bowness Fischer. Lieut. Colonel H.M.
British Consular Agent at Rankal

addressee by name, unless the name of his village be correctly given. It is considered that in cases where money is remitted by means of post office orders the identification of the recipient would be greatly facilitated, if the Post Office should ascertain and enter, where possible, the registered number of the coolie who remits. This number will refer to a register kept at the port in India from which the immigrant originally embarked and should it be found that the name of the man's village is incorrectly written in the address of the letter enclosing the order, a reference to the register in India will always disclose the real name of the locality intended to be designated.

39. Native States

All objection to the engagement of Indian coolies for labour on estates in Native States on the Malay Peninsula in which there is a Resident subordinate to the Governor of the Straits Settlements will be withdrawn by

by.

forward to the Indian Immigration agent monthly a return shewing all stoppages and that these shall be subject to the confirmation of the latter after enquiry.

36. It is considered that (See Report of Commission, 1881, para 189) it will be sufficient to require the Indian Immigration Agent to visit every Estate once in three months, authorizing him, however, to visit any estate at lesser intervals should he deem it advisable. The returns of stoppages will afford him a good guide for his conduct in this respect.

37. It is not proposed that the power of the employer to stop the pay of a coolie shall in any way deprive him of his right to prosecute the man for his offence at a Police Court if he prefers to take that course.

38. Remittances to India. It is desirable that facilities shall be given to immigrants to remit money to their friends in India; experience having proved that in India there is great difficulty sometimes in tracing an

addressee

35. Stoppage of pay. In working the present Immigration Ordinance (I of 1876) it has been felt to be a hardship both to employer and labourer that the former has no power to stop the pay of the latter for a trifling offence without the intervention of the magistrate. It is fully admitted on all sides that to take coolies through the district for miles as prisoners, because certain petty offences cannot be dealt with summarily by the employer is a serious evil. It is considered expedient that in the new Ordinance the employer shall have power, to stop from the wages of a coolie half a day's pay as a punishment for an act of disobedience, and that for absence and neglect to work the wages of the defaulting labourer may be stopped by the employer for the period of such absence or neglect. This practice has been adopted in the Inland Emigration Act (Assam) and it is proposed that the abuse of authority by the employer shall be guarded against by means similar to those prescribed in that enactment, namely, that the employer shall

forward

fixed as the maximum sum which any statute-labourer shall be required by his contract to repay is in excess of what will be the real cost incidental on his transfer from India to the Straits and if, as has been alleged, the recruiter's fee may be susceptible of reduction from 17 Rs (the present charge) to one dollar, the sum above stated as the maximum may be reduced by one half.

34. It is a question therefore whether any reasonable grounds can be shewn for maintaining the period of contract at three years or whether it should not be reduced in the new Ordinance to two years. Even the maximum sum of twelve dollars should be repaid by the labourer in one year or little more and it is difficult to see why, in that case, he should be bound for a further term of two years. This is a point which it has been felt should be left to the Legislative Council of the Straits Settlements to decide the arguments in favor of the reduced term being merely summarised here.

Stoppage

at nine hours actual work. This was recommended in the report of the Commission of 1881. See Report para 64.

32 Period of Contract. The maximum term now permitted by law to be inserted in the Ordinance contract is three years. This is also the maximum term for which a contract may be made under the Labour Contracts Ordinance of 1882, though it would appear that at one time the Secretary of State for the Colonies held the opinion that one year was the maximum term which should be legally enforced under that enactment.

33 Previous to 1876 the customary term for which Indian coolies engaged for labour in the Straits was two years, but, as the Indian act V of 1877 imposed restrictions which added to the expenses of the planter in procuring labour, the Government of India agreed to the raising of the term of service to three years. These restrictions are now to be removed and with them the additional expenses of the planter will naturally cease. It is believed that the sum of twelve dollars which has been provisionally

fixed

29. Penal provisions will be necessary to prescribe the punishment to which the master of a vessel and other persons shipping uncertificated immigrants for conveyance from the Colony shall be liable and executive arrangements will have to be made to ensure that the object of legislation in this respect shall not be defeated.

30. The object of the certificate system is two fold; firstly, to prevent the ordinance interfering with the liberty of the native of India who is able to take care of himself; secondly, to enable Port Officials and ship captains to be certain at once what passengers may be taken on board without breach of the Ordinance. At present it is impossible for any one to decide with certainty whether a native of India is being taken away for the purpose of labour or not.

31. Ordinance Contract

Hours of Work. It is proposed to fix the time which shall constitute a day's work in the case of an indentured labourer (called in the Ordinance a "statute immigrant")

at

those of the trading class who are. This must be the duty of the Indian Immigration agent in the Straits and of the Emigration Department in Madras.

27. It is proposed that it shall be made penal in the Colony for any native of British India to leave the Colony for any place other than British India unless he be provided with a certificate stating that he is not a labourer or of the labouring class. This certificate may be issued (free of charge) either by the Emigration Department at the ports in the Madras Presidency or by the Indian Immigration Agent's Department in the Colony and will be in force for one year after which it may be renewed.

28. The holder of such a certificate is free to go where he likes and if he travels from India to the Straits in a vessel which conveys labourers he will be entitled to leave the vessel after her arrival in port without being subjected to any of the formalities necessary in the case of other native passengers.

Penal

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Penal.

23. Certain features in it which are new and certain important points which remain for decision by the Legislature of the Colony require notice here.

24. Certificated immigrants- It is admitted to be a matter of absolute necessity to prevent by all possible means the emigration of natives of British India of the labouring class to the Colonies of other European Powers with whom the Government of India has no Convention or to neighbouring Asiatic States not under British protection.

25. This does not apply to persons not of the labouring class, such as traders, shopkeepers, etc. and it is desired to afford all such persons due facility for escaping the restrictions to be placed by law upon emigration from the Colony.

26. Masters of vessels leaving the ports of the Colony cannot be expected to be able to distinguish between Indians of the labouring class who are not entitled to proceed to neighbouring Colonies and States and

emigration from India to the Straits and the substitution of general superintendence of all indentured Indian labourers in the Colony for the special supervision of a particular class, the title of "Protector of Immigrants" which has hitherto been given to the officer charged with the latter duty should be exchanged for one more in consonance with the altered situation. "Indian Immigration Agent" would appear to be a more suitable title for the Officer to be employed in future. He should, as already agreed, be appointed by the Madras Government, while receiving his salary and all official instructions from the Colonial Government.

22 A draft Ordinance has been drawn up by Mr. Buck and Major Fischer in communication with Mr. Maxwell. Though admittedly incomplete in details it is believed that it sufficiently embodies the principles already laid down in this Note as those held by the Government of India, Madras and by the Government of the Straits

Certain

labour in trades, service, menial employment, etc., Immigrants of this class may be legally bound by any contract enforceable under the general law of the Colony.

20. A question arises whether at the time of the coming into operation of the new Immigration Ordinance the persons described above in class 2., many of whom are now employed under contracts intended to be enforced under the general labour-law (Ordinance I of 1882), shall or shall not be held to be free from such contracts, as it is proposed that such persons shall in future be employed under the Ordinance contract and not otherwise. It will probably be sufficient to declare in the Ordinance that for the purposes of the Ordinance such contracts shall be held to have the same effect as if they had been made in accordance with it.

21. It seems advisable that, having regard to the complete alteration of the policy regarding emigration

New Ordinance Contract.

2. Immigrants, who arrive in the Colony not under advances and those already in the Colony who engage to labour on an estate where agricultural labourers are employed. Immigrants of this class will not be legally bound by any contract except the new ordinance contract

3 Immigrants, who arrive in the Colony under advances intending to contract for their repayment by labour in trades, service, menial employment, etc., Immigrants of this class may be legally bound by any contract enforceable under the general law of the Colony.

4. Immigrants, who arrive in the Colony under no advances and who are already in the Colony who enter into a contract for

labour.

for disobedience to lawful orders, negligence of duty, carelessness in taking care of property or other misconduct. Whereas, the scale of punishment under the Immigration Ordinance, is decidedly lighter.

18. The object sought by the Government of India is to subject all Indian immigrants working on estates or in large gangs to inspection and to ensure them good treatment. There is no proposal to affect by legislation the immigrants who come as colonists or for employment in trades, etc.. This principle being accepted the native of India in the Straits Settlements, as regards his liability under a contract to labour, may be classified as follows:-

19. 1. Immigrants, who arrive in the Colony under advances intending to labour on an estate where agricultural labourers are employed. Immigrants of this class will not be legally bound by any contract except the

New

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New

bound to supply hospital accommodation and medicines while as regards others also working under advances but under local contracts, he is under no such obligation.

17. Finally as regards the inclination of the coolie himself it is difficult, after comparing his liability to punishment for breach of contract under Ordinance I of 1882, with the liability attaching to similar offences under the Immigration Ordinance, to understand that any reasonable supposition can be entertained that he will be in any worse position under the latter than under the former. On this point it is sufficient to say that the labourer whose contract makes him subject to the Labour Contracts Ordinance may, if he absconds, be arrested without warrant and may under some circumstances be imprisoned for six months for breach of contract. He may also be punished by a fine of twenty-five dollars or thirty days' rigorous imprisonment for

residence in the Colony may contract under the general law, it must be manifest that in either of these cases it would be easy by fraud or collusion to manufacture, so to speak, old coolies out of new ones and to evade the new Ordinance with little danger of detection.

16. Apart from the difficulty which exists of defining "old coolies" and "new coolies" for legislative purposes there are many reasons why the simple distinction of agricultural labourers and non-agricultural labourers should be adhered to in the New Ordinance. The incidents of service of all coolies on an estate should be similar. There can be no good reason why one body of Indian coolies should live under proper sanitary regulations, while others in adjoining houses on the same estate should be under no control in this respect. Nor does there appear to be any logical explanation of the fact that at present an employer of coolies working off their first advances is

bound

labourers could be rigidly maintained in practice.

14. If this view of the planters could be accepted it would be necessary to define clearly what labourer should be bound by no contract other than the ordinance contract and what labourer should have power to bind himself by a contract under the general law.

15. It is not easy to see where the line is to be drawn. It must be remembered that the Ordinance Contract is to be executed in future in the Colony and not in India. Suppose that it were declared by law that the coolie who is working off his first contract for the repayment of his passage and advances is a man who must be bound by the Ordinance contract, and no other, while he who renews may contract under the general law: or enact that the coolie during the three first years of his residence in the Colony shall be bound by the Ordinance Contract only while an immigrant after three years'

residence

while he shall be at liberty afterwards to contract under the general labour law, for this would open a door to evasion of the special ordinance by fictitious first contracts for short terms followed by contracts for further terms under the general law.

13. Some employers of coolie labour in the Straits are opposed to applying the same labour-law to coolies freshly arrived from India as to those who having served their apprenticeship on an estate as indentured immigrants are willing to renew their engagements for a further term. They would prefer to contract with the latter under the general labour law (Ordinance I of 1882) and assert that such an arrangement is in accordance with the expressed inclination of this class of labourer. But even if the Government of India were willing to yield a point so much insisted upon in the Ootacamund Note it is doubtful whether the distinction between the two classes of agricultural

labourers

may be employed by him under the general law of the Colony. There is already a large resident population of Indians in the Straits Settlements and it does not appear from the Note that it is proposed to interfere with the power of free labourers to contract verbally or in writing to labour in trades or callings not agricultural.

11. It is not proposed that all contracts for labour of any kind entered into hereafter by an Indian immigrant with an employer shall be made under the future Immigration Ordinance and not otherwise. In a Colony where there is a free resident population of Indians, many born in and subjects of the Colony it will be often difficult, if not impossible to say, who is an immigrant and who is not.

12. It would not be enough to declare that the Indian Immigrant during his first contract term of service shall be subject to the special ordinance, while

absence of special legislation in the Straits the newly arrived coolie would be subject to the general labour-law of the Colony as embodied in the Labour Contracts Ordinance.

9. In undertaking special legislation to obviate such a result it becomes necessary to consider how far Ordinance I of 1882 shall be declared to be inapplicable to Indian immigrants in the Straits Settlements. In the Ootacamund Note already referred to the terms of which are accepted generally by the Straits Government, a desire is expressed to include "free labourers", employed by planters on estates, in the general scheme of supervision and protection adopted for the benefit of indentured immigrants.

10. It must therefore be declared very clearly what natives of India must be employed by a planter under the future Immigration Ordinance and not otherwise and what (if any) natives of India may

maximum sum which may be entered in a labour contract as the debt which the coolie has to work off. This should be fixed for the present at $12, but power should be given by the Ordinance to the Governor of the Straits Settlements to alter this from time to time according as the facilities of communication and the circumstances of recruiting make labour cheap or otherwise.

8 There is in force in the Straits Settlements a local Ordinance (No I of 1882, Labour Contracts Ordinance) by which the relations between employer and labourer are governed. Coolies who enter into a contract in the Colony for service are subject to the provisions of this law, and, but for the fact that the Indian Act V of 1877, obliges intending coolie-emigrants to execute the labour contract in India before departure, it would apply to this class of labourers among others. With the repeal of Act V of 1877 therefore and in the

absence.

1. That coolies who arrive under advances, for labour in the Straits may be detained in licensed depôts for a period not exceeding seven days

2. That a coolie who after his arrival in the Colony and before signing a contract to labour pays his debt shall be absolutely free of all express or implied engagement to enter into a contract to labour.

3. That a coolie under advances who attempts to evade his obligations by escaping from the depôt or by refusing to contract for labour for the employer at whose expense he has been brought from India may be punished.

7. In order to prevent the transfer of a coolie from agent to agent by a real or fictitious payment of the debt, the amount being swelled possibly on each transaction by charges, and in order to protect the coolie generally from excessive charges, it becomes necessary to fix definitely the

maximum

own Government, he would report.

4. Any Recruiter sent from the Colony to the Madras Presidency to engage coolies will, on production of a written certificate from the Indian Immigration agent in the Colony that he is a person to whom a license to recruit may properly be given, be furnished with a license to recruit upon the usual terms.

5. The most important change which will result from the repeal of Indian Act V of 1877 is in the legal status of the coolie at the time when he reaches the Colony. Instead of arriving already bound by the terms of a written contract drawn up in India, he will land in the Colony as a debtor to the extent of the sums paid for his passage and advanced to him on the other side of the Bay of Bengal, for the repayment of which sums he will be under a verbal engagement to give his labour.

6. Under these circumstances it is agreed that the Straits Ordinance must include provisions giving affect to the following principles:-

That

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6. Under these circumstances it is agreed that the Straits Ordinance must include provisions giving affect to the following principles:-

That.

names and a few particulars. Similarly, every desire is entertained on the part of the Government of the Colony to avoid troublesome restrictions in regard to this class of passengers on the arrival of the vessel in port. Provisions will be inserted in the New Ordinance freeing first and second class passengers, their servants and all "certificated immigrants" from all restrictions on arrival. A Steamer Company which conveys coolie-emigrants to the Straits must of course submit to all necessary formalities in respect of all native passengers except those just enumerated, but after all this need give very little trouble.

3 The Government of the Straits is willing that the Head of the Emigration Department in Madras shall at any time visit the Colony and make all examinations and enquiries on estates, etc., which may appear necessary. This Officer should, as proposed by the Government of Madras act under the regulations of or in concurrence with the Colonial Government to whom, as well as to his own

Printed copy,
in file—

Note embodying the principles on which emigration from India to the Straits will hereafter be conducted.

[illegible]

Published in the Straits Settlement Gazette 17/8/83.

1. The proposals of the Government of India made in conjunction with the Government of Madras are summarised in a Note dated Ootacamund, 6 June 1883, and to these the Government of the Straits Settlements have no objection to offer, expressing, however, their confidence that the system of registration of all passengers leaving Madras for the Straits will be so managed as to cause the minimum of inconvenience to free native passengers.

x G.O. No. 1238 / 23/6/83

2. It is believed that this registration, which should be carried out free of charge, by an official sent for that purpose on board a vessel clearing for the Straits, will cause little trouble to those passengers, who though travelling in a vessel which conveys coolie-emigrants, are not themselves proceeding to the Straits for labour. They will be required to give their names

form the arrangements which have been under consideration.

By His Excellency's Command

(Signed) C. J. Irving

Colonial Secretary

Colonial Secretary's
Office: Singapore
6th July 1883.

(True Copy)

Downes Fischer

British Consular Agent, Karikal

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have been engaged for that purpose or are willing so to engage the Resident being still answerable for the wages and treatment of such labourers and exercising a lawful supervision over them.

(Sd) F. A. Weld

Governor

Singapore
6th July 1883

The Indian Government having appointed Mr. Buck, Secretary to Indian Government; and the Madras Government having also appointed Major Fischer of the Madras Staff Corps and British Consular Agent at Karikal, to confer with His Excellency the Governor on the question of the Immigration of Labourers from India to the Straits Settlements.

His Excellency the Governor after consultation with Mr. Buck, Major Fischer, and with his Executive Council has appointed Hon'ble Major McNair, C.M.G. Acting Resident Councillor, Penang, the Hon. W. E. Maxwell, Member of the Executive Council and C. W. S. Kynnersley Esqre Senior Magistrate, Penang, to meet Mr. Buck and Major Fischer at Penang and reduce to a

From the Colonial Secretary, Singapore to Major Barnes Fischer, Madras Staff Corps, Penang; dated Singapore 11th July 1883 No. 6353/83.

I have the honor to transmit to you for your information the accompanying copy of an order by His Excellency the Governor, dated the 6th instant, appointing the Officers therein named to confer with you and Mr. Buck in regard to the proposed arrangements for regulating the Immigration of Indian Labourers into this Colony and also a copy of a minute by His Excellency, of the same date, on the subject of special arrangements proposed in regard of the re-emigration of natives of India from the Straits Settlements to the protected States of Malay Peninsula.

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* Re Indian Immigration

I propose with regard to Native Protected States in which special arrangements have not been made. That the State through its Resident and with the sanction of the Governor should obtain such Immigrants as may be needed, making all necessary arrangements, and that any planters in any such State wishing to obtain labour may apply to the Resident who will send them or such of them as may appear fit such labourers as may

* This Minute is copied exactly as it came to me.

Public
Emigration (1883) Department

From
The British Consular Agent
Karikal

No 663

Dated 1st }
Recd 5th } Sept 1883

CURRENT No. 2736

Subject

Has the honor to submit his Report on his recent tour on Special Duty through the Straits Settlements

CHIEF SECRETARY
5 SEP 83
GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

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32

would to co-operate with us; and having obtained their cordial concurrence in our propositions, we then settled the bases of a Joint-note embodying the principles upon which we were thus agreed, and, consequently those on which emigration from India to the Straits Settlements would, for the future, be conducted. This note, which was drawn up by the Hon Mr Maxwell, was finally reconsidered and signed on the afternoon of the 26th of July; and, about two hours afterwards, Mr Buck was on his way to Rangoon, on board the Chinese steamer Fitzpatrick.

I have the honor to be
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant
Bowness Fischer
British Consular Agent, Karikal

P.S. ~~Enclosed in~~ Accompanying this Report are:-

(1) A copy of the Penang

(2) A copy of the correspondence from the Colonial Secretary

(3) A map of Penang & of Province Wellesley: and

(4) A ~~map~~ general map of the Malay Peninsula extracted from the latest edition of "The Singapore & Straits Directory".

C.F.

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we again sallied out with Sir Hugh and visited nine or ten tin mines, about six or seven miles out of town, where we saw all the different processes of washing, cleaning, and smelting the tin, returning to the Residency about 6 p.m. About an hour afterwards we took leave of Sir Hugh Low; and, at the instance of the Master of the Kinta, returned to Matang, which we reached at 9 p.m.

24. It had been our intention to run into the ~~Krian~~ Kurau River, in order to visit some of the Sugar plantations in the North of Perak; and to make our way afterwards, across country, into Province Wellesley. But a variety of accidents, not the least of which was a heavy squall we met *en route*, frustrated this plan; and, finding it impossible to get into the Kurau river by the time we had anticipated, we finally determined to enter Province Wellesley by the Krian, and reached Telong Jebat at 10 a.m.

25. From the landing place we walked to Mr. Palsford's house; where we found Mr. Macgregor awaiting our arrival. Mr. Buck then inspected the Estate; and, after a searching examination of the books, which lasted till nearly 2 p.m., we once more crossed the Krian river, and went on to the Victoria Estate. Here there was a similarly severe inspection of Mr. McGilveray's book which showed a far more satisfactory state of things than that disclosed by Mr. Palsford's. Not only were the coolies on the Victoria Estate not "cut" in the manner practised (and apparently without any control) by Mr. Palsford; but they seemed to work far better than they did on the Trans-Krian plantation. These investigations con-firmed, at the same time, some very unsatisfactory discoveries Mr. Buck had made at Negapatam as to the manner in which contracts had too often been executed at that place, discoveries which had become more and

more apparent as our experience extended; and they appeared also to show that, in order to check these and other abuses, a more intimate connexion would have to be established by law between the books of the Protector of Immigrants and those kept by the planters. But this by the way. By the time our inspection at Victoria was over the day was far spent; and it became necessary to think of returning to Penang. We, therefore, pushed on to Bukit Tamboon without visiting Caledonia; got on board the Kinta; and at 8 p.m. were once more in George Town.

26. There was an immense amount of work yet to be gone through, the greater for our recent travels; and, as the only available accomodation in town was by no means favourable to this kind of labour, Major McNair very kindly placed at our entire disposal Government House on the Hill. The day after our return to George Town, therefore, we went up to the Hill, accompanied by the Hon. Mr. Maxwell; and, in the invigorating quiet of this lovely retreat, settled down to our task. Our stay on the Hill lasted from the 20th to 25th July; and during this time Mr. Buck and I revised, for the third time, the Ordinance we had first drafted on board the [illegible] — a task in which we derived invaluable assistance from the wide and varied experience of Mr. Maxwell as Senior Magistrate of Province Wellesley, as Assistant Resident and Acting Resident of Perak, as acting Lieutenant-Governor of Malacca and as a foremost member of the Executive Council of the Straits Settlements. Having thus remodelled the lines on which, in our opinion, future local legislation should be constructed, we submitted our scheme to the judgment of those Officers who had been appointed by Sir Frederick

world with the exhilarating aspirations of vigorous and healthy youth; and the influence of Sir Hugh Low's high spirits and indomitable energy appears to animate every member of his administration. Progress here is made "by leaps and bounds"; and employment grows so quickly that (as Mr. Caulfield, the Head of the Public Works Department, said to me) "the work begun by a man at the commencement of a year is generally found too much for two at the end". The town of Taiping itself, with its broad, clean streets and its spacious houses, resembles some rising Australian town, with ample room around it in which to expand; and the hum of business that animates it all through the live-long day shows that there is work and to spare for every one, and that no man in it need be a beggar, Sir Hugh Low desired that we should visit all the public institutions of Taiping, and accompanied us, himself, to every one of them, introducing us, at the same time, to all the principal Officers of his administration. In this way we visited and inspected, between breakfast and luncheon, the admirable barracks, hospital and family quarters of the imposing body of Sikhs who are maintained as a Police Force at Taiping and the principal Station (on the best London model) where Law, in the first instance, asserts itself; the spacious Courts; the commodious Government offices; the public schools, where Chinese, Klings and Europeans draw from the same fountain; the comfortable lines of the Pioneers, and a specimen of their handiwork in ~~this~~ a very substantial platform for the new railway station; the vast range of hospitals, in which we saw about 500 Chinamen in every stage of beri-beri; and last, but not least in interest, some of the licensed gambling houses. Immediately after luncheon

irrepressible Kling", said Sir Hugh, "will no more be kept from ~~whom~~ where money is to be made than the ~~Graeculus~~ Graeculus esuriens, according to Juvenal, will be kept out of heaven!" And it was, no doubt, with a certain shock that we found Ramasawmy, whom we had for years been adjuring not to go to Perak, not only settled there, in spite of our supplications, but actually settled in ease and comfort. It was, however, a decidedly pleasant surprise; and was but the prelude to others of the same kind. For instance, shortly before we arrived at Penang a dark and disquieting story had come to Mr. Macgregor's ears about "a large number of coolies (natives of India) being introduced, via Ceylon, nto Perak for Public Works"; and, in repeating it, he said: f I remember aright a Planter, a few years ago, was on the erge of being prosecuted for a similar course as being ontrary to the law of this Colony and that of Ceylon." This as awkward enough in all conscience — more especially s we were to be the guests of the present Government hat had perpetrated this breach of the law! But when e met these same natives of India, later in the day, we ere relieved to find that they merely belonged to two ivisions of the Ceylon Pioneers, whom the Government of at Island had lent to Sir Hugh Low for the purpose of nstructing a railway from Taiping to Port Weld. Each ivision consisted of 200 men under the command of a opean Officer; and they were engaged for three years, the extraordinarily high rate of 30 cents a day for an inary and 60 cents for a skilled workman.

It is impossible to convey in the limited space cessary at my command, any adequate idea of the varied d novel impressions that crowded upon us during our o short visit to this part of Perak. It is a fresh young tended towards the views expressed by Hon. Mr Vermont, the subject was suspended for further consideration by our Committee; and a long and animated conversation ensued on various matters connected with the food and hygiene of the coolies, their treatment in hospital, and the mortality on different Estates, in the course of which a great deal of useful and suggestive information was elicited. And, after a mutual exchange of the customary courtesies, the meeting — which had lasted nearly four hours and had been nothing less than a big and very pleasant talk — finally broke up. The same evening Mr Buck and I, accompanied by the Hon Mr Maxwell, were on board Sir Hugh Low's ~~yacht~~ yacht, the *Kinta*, *en route* for Perak.

22. We arrived at Matang, on the Larut river, early next morning, and were met by Sir Hugh Low, who had driven down all the way from the Assistant Residency at Taïping, about nine miles distant, to drive back again with us. It is noteworthy that the very first persons who greeted us at the landing place were some Madrassees, who, with the keen eye for business that distinguishes Ramasawmy when his foot is on his native sands, had come down to pick up an odd job ~~and that~~ while nearly all the carts we met on the road to Taïping (and we must have met two or three hundred of them) were not only driven by Madras bandy men but drawn by the old familiar bullock of our own Presidency. Here and there, too, we came upon small colonies of Madrassees, snugly settled along the road side; and, but for the superb scenery, I could almost have fancied myself driving along some crowded high way near our own city of Madras itself. "The

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dragging him before the Magistrate for every trifling offence. In India, he said, the law is different: Section 170 of Act No 1 of 1882 provides that the employer shall send in a statement to the Inspector who, in the presence of the labourer, will enquire into all cases of absence from work and adjudge the labourer to make up to his employer for the loss of the labour. All the planters ask for, continued Mr Vermont, is that, at the end of every month, the employer shall be allowed to make out a list of those who may have absented themselves from or otherwise neglected their work, and that this list shall be submitted to the Protector or to his Inspector, who may be duly authorised to inquire into each case, and, after settling it, to initial the books of the Estate. Some further conversation then ensued; and it was finally agreed that the advisability of substituting Section 170 of the Assam Act for Section 70 of the draft Ordinance should be ~~taken into~~ left for the consideration of our Committee. The fourth point raised was the Sunday question; and Mr Vermont gave it as his opinion that, while there were no objections on the part of the planters to Sunday being fixed as the day of rest, he thought it would be better to let the provisions of the present Ordinance, in this respect, remain as they are. As a matter of fact, he went on to say, Sunday would generally be the day of rest, but it might, sometimes, happen to be an inconvenient day; and the Planters, he continued, were willing to pay for the seventh day ~~of~~ if the coolie has fulfilled the previous six days work. Mr Lister was here appealed to for his experience as a planter in Ceylon, and he stated that no day was fixed by law in that Colony; that Sunday was generally taken as the day of rest, but that no pay was given for that day. As the general consensus of opinion tended towards the views expressed by Hon. Mr. Vermont, the subject was suspended for further consideration by our Committee; and a long and animated conversation ensued on various matters connected with the food and hygiene of the coolies, their treatment in hospital, and the mortality on different Estates, in the course of which a great deal of useful and suggestive information was elicited. And, after a mutual exchange of the customary courtesies, the meeting — which had lasted nearly four hours and had been nothing less than a big and very pleasant talk — finally broke up. The same evening Mr. Buck and I, accompanied by the Hon. Mr. Maxwell, were on board Sir Hugh Low's ~~gunboat~~ yacht, the Kinta, *en route* for Perak.

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be reduced to two years. Mr. Vermont, however, was of opinion that the term then in vogue should be maintained, at any rate for the present; pleading in extenuation of this opinion, that two years would not be sufficient time in which to enable the planters to recoup themselves for the money they had spent on their immigrants: as the coolie required one whole year in which to become acclimatized, another to learn his work, and that it was not until the third year that he really acquired any value as a labourer! This remarkable statement was repeated, with much fervour, by Mr. Roberts, who, in the course of a rather rambling allocution, went so far as to prophesy that the Indian coolie would not come over to Province Wellesley unless he could be bound down for more than two years to his employer — a prediction which, if futile in other respects, was at any rate useful in indicating what Mr. Roberts means by "free immigration". In the course of the conversation which ensued, Mr. Vermont owned that there had been a time when contracts had been made for only one year; but, as even this fact seemed to bring the desired conviction no nearer consummation, the point in dispute was, by mutual consent dropped, for the present, and left open for future consideration by our Committee. The third point discussed was the reference to the Magistrate of all complaints against coolies for neglect of work, which, as the Chairman pointed out, not only threw much additional work upon this Officer but entailed an equal hardship upon both labourer and employer. Mr. Vermont agreed that it was, as Major McNair had stated, very hard on both parties, and especially on the employer: as it gives the coolie the idea that the former is a hard task master in thus

by the Hon Major McNair, was very well attended. Besides ourselves and the Officials of the Straits Settlements Government who had been appointed by Sir Frederick Weld to co-operate with us, there were present: the Hon. G. M. Sandilands, the Hon. J. M. B. Vermont, Messrs. L. L. Brown, C. A. Brown, J. J. ~~Tait~~, Tait, H. de Mornay, W. S. Setterbridge, D. Logan, Kho-Boo-lin, Teh Soon, C. L. Roberts, and Messrs. Lister and Rathbone, two planters from Sungei Ujong. The Hon Major McNair opened the meeting in a short speech in which he briefly sets forth the reasons for which it had been convened; and Mr. Buck then delivered an earnest and effective address in which he expressed the motives of our joint visit to the Straits Settlements and explained the intentions of our respective Governments. The first point then considered by the meeting was the minimum amount of the wages to be fixed by the new Ordinance; and, after some discussion, in which Mr. Vermont took a leading part, it was finally agreed that the present rate, of twelve cents a day rising eventually to fourteen, should be adhered to. The second point discussed was the maximum term of contract; and, in introducing it, Mr. Buck explained that our Government had agreed to the three years' contract system simply out of consideration for the expenses incurred by planters in getting immigrants over to the Straits under the present cumbersome régime, but now that this régime was to be reversed, that the restrictions in India which made it so costly were to be removed, it was desirable, he insisted that that term should again "supervision over them".

20. Mr Buck returned to Penang, accompanied by the Hon. Mr Maxwell, about the same time that I did; and early next morning we set to work to revise, de fond en comble, the Ordinance we had ~~[illegible]~~ drafted on board the Mena Kelua by the light of the new and more extended experience we had acquired during our travels in Malacca, in Sungei Ujong, and in Province Wellesley. But the task was by no means an easy one; and though we worked, sans rémission, from early morn to night fall, the progress we made was, from the merely literary point of view, but slow. We resumed our labours shortly after day break next morning, and hoped to have completed them in time for a public meeting of the Planters of Penang & Province Wellesley, who had been asked to meet us on the following day, when we were interrupted by an unexpected visit from Sir Hugh Low, the Resident of the Protected Native State of Perak, who had paid us the distinguished compliment of coming over, in propriâ persona, to invite us to inspect his domains. Little work, consequently, was done on this day; and, instead of being able to submit our Ordinance in its entirety to the criticism of the Planters who had been invited to meet us on the following day, we had only time to collate the more salient innovations we proposed to introduce, and to embody them in a short and concise memorandum, which Mr Buck drew up for this purpose.

21. The meeting, which took place on the 17th of July at the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, and was presided

spending a long afternoon in quiet talk with Mr Tait, we started for Bukit Tamboon, where the steam-launch was awaiting us; and towards night-fall we were once more at Penang.

18. On arriving at Penang I found a letter from the Colonial Secretary, informing me that His Excellency the Governor had appointed the Hon. Major McNair, C.M.G. Acting Resident Councillor of Penang, the Hon. W. E. Maxwell, Member of the Executive Council, and Mr C. W. S. Kynnersley, the Senior Magistrate of Penang to confer with Mr Buck and myself in regard to the proposed arrangements for regulating the immigration of Indian labourers into the Colony and to reduce these proposed arrangements to form.

19. With this letter, Mr Irving sent me, at the same time, the copy of a Minute by Sir Frederick Weld with regard to the re-engagement, within the Straits Settlements, of Indian labourers for the Protected Native States of the Malay Peninsula. The Minute of His Excellency was dated the 6th of July; and ran as follows:— "I propose,
"with regard to Native Protected States in which special
"arrangements have not been made, that the State,
"through its Resident, and with the sanction of the Governor,
"should obtain such immigrants as may be needed,
"making all necessary arrangements; and that any planters
"in any such ~~[illegible]~~ State, wishing to obtain labour, may
"apply to the Resident, who will lend them, or such of them
"as may appear fit, such labourers as may have been
"engaged for that purpose, or are willing so to engage—
"the Resident being still answerable for the wages and
"treatment of such labourers and exercising a lawful

-The fields were unkempt, untidy, unweeded; and, after the sunny, smiling neatly kept champaign lands at Batu Kawan, these rank and gloomy congeries of discordant and over crowded vegetation seemed the very abomination of desolation! The idea of sordid economy was instinct in everything we saw: in the badly-made, grass-grown roads, in the stubbly fields, in the twisted and distorted sugar canes, in the lean, starveling tapioca shrubs, in the stinking *dunder* festering in the stagnant canals — until one wondered how these Chinamen could make "a living" out of such conditions. That some one did, however — even if the absentee landlord lost thereby — was evident in the sleek, sturdy Chinese coolies we saw *chuckling*, here and there, in quiet gangs, and in the perfectly comfortable Kling labourers we met along the roads. There were only 35 of these coolies employed on this Estate; and their huts were no better than what one sees in some out-of-the-way *Indian* hamlet, with the old familiar *pipal* — a feature that is absent from the more luxurious *lines* on other Estates — and the domestic smoke struggling uneasily through the squalid eaves. Although some of these coolies complained that rice at Simpang Ampat was retailed to them ~~wh~~ with less liberality than is customary on European Estates, they did not appear discontented with their general condition; and as nearly all of them had, so they told us, completed their task-work for the day at half-past-eight o'clock in the morning, it is evident that, in this respect at any rate, they were — as the Kling, *apud* Mr. Macgregor, generally *is* with the Chinaman — masters of the situation.

17. We returned to Batu Kawan about midday, and, after

and more willingness year by year to conform to the advice he has found it his duty to offer him, there is reason to believe that, as the remembrance of his early struggles recedes from him, he will acquire the same philosophic breadth of view as that upon which we, who have not had the same hardships to endure, so complacently ~~pride~~ pride ourselves. That he is thoroughly good hearted is, I believe, the unanimous opinion of all who know him; and no one thinks that he is even inclined to ill-treat his dependents. Even were he otherwise, he possesses, ever at his elbow, an invaluable mentor and co-adjutor in person of Mr. Tait, a young Scotch gentleman of refined and cultivated tastes, who enjoys, in an eminent degree, those sterling qualities of character which have given his countrymen so commanding a position in the world. I had the advantage of a very long and interesting conversation with Mr. Tait during the evening of my stay at Batu Kawan; and I recognized in him a dominant influence for good amongst the new race of young planters who are fast elbowing out their elders in Province Wellesley.

16. Leaving Batu Kawan shortly after daybreak next morning we crossed the river, and started to inspect a typical Chinese Estate, ~~[illegible]~~ entirely under Chinese management. The property belongs to Tan-Sim-Ho, a Chinese gentleman who, apparently, does not trouble it often with a visit, and covers 1100 acres, about 500 of which ~~are~~ are under cultivation. But under such cultivation! Sugar and ~~and~~ tapioca grow, cheek by jowl, in adjoining fields; and, here and there, amidst them, struggling for an inadequate existence, were lanky cocoanut trees and coarsely aggressive plantain palms.

some of the blocks were over-crowded, and that, in several houses, separate families were living in a promiscuous manner that seemed to me by no means desirable. It is true that this inconvenience was only temporary; but it appeared to me that it might have been obviated by forethought, and by a little more management. The water supply too, which has always been the great difficulty at Batu Kawan, (the water being brought to the Estate in pipes from the neighbouring hills) also exposed the unpleasant side of its features on the occasion of my visit: when we went up to examine the filters, I found one filter useless, another under repair, and a third out of repair. The hospital was very much like what I had seen on some of the other Estates; but I was surprised to find that the temple for the coolies, which, on other Estates is considered a *sine quâ non*, was here looked upon with distrust and suspicion, was situated apart and at some distance from the lines, and was only then in slow process of construction. Nor was I very favourably impressed with the school, a mere attap shed, open all round; and it seemed to me that if education is actually to be a reality on the Estate more liberal accomodation might, at any rate, have been afforded it. That Mr. Vermont — who has had to "rough it" from his youth up and has made his way through life by sheer pluck and native wit — should not entertain the same ideas on religion, on education, and on hygiene as ourselves is not, upon reflection, to be wondered at. But I am confident, from what I have seen of him, that he is always amenable to our modes of thinking if properly appealed to; and, as Mr. Macgregor states that he has shown more

matter of about half an hour; and we reached the Hon. Mr. Vermont's house as the sun was slowly sinking behind the distant hills of Penang. The Batu Kawan Estate is the largest in the Province, and owes its existence to the energetic enterprise of Mr. Vermont, who found it a mere mangrove swamp about thirty years ago, and, by dint of untiring perseverance, made it what it now is. It covers an area of 4 500 acres; and as it increased in size, apparently, it attracted other capital beside that which Mr. Vermont had invested in it. The gentlemen who have now an interest in it, in addition to its enterprising author, are Colonel Brown, Mr. C. A. Brown, and Mr. J. J. Tait; and Mr. Macgregor asserts, in his Annual Report for 1881, that their average nett profits amount to 35,000 dollars, or about £8,000 a year. Mr. Vermont was unavoidably absent from Batu Kawan when we arrived there, not having yet returned from Singapore; and we were received by Mr. Tait, one of the shareholders of the Estate, who has been acting as manager for some time past, and to whose initiative Mr. Macgregor is inclined to attribute a large share in the improvement that has recently become more apparent in the condition of the labourers employed here. Be this as it may, I cannot say that I was very favourably impressed with the State of the Lines, which were, in some respects, inferior to those I had seen on other Estates, though, of course, they were, generally above the level of comfort attainable in an ordinary Indian hamlet. There had recently been a large accession of labourers to Batu Kawan without any proportionate provision having been previously made for their accomodation; and the consequence was that

17

and, apparently very attentive apothecary in attendance.

14. From this hospital we drove on to the adjoining Estate of Caledonia, which is of the same age as Victoria, conducted on similar principles, and to which, consequently, very much the same remarks apply. As at Victoria, the mill was at a stand-still for the time being; and the Lines, which were also "pucka built", nearly exactly resembled those we had just quitted. It was about midday when we arrived at Caledonia, and, chemin faisant, we met many Coolies who were returning from the cane-fields having completed their task-work for the entire day — a proof, (the corroboration of which we found on nearly every other Estate) that, for the able-bodied and willing labourer, these tasks are neither excessive nor onerous. The Caledonia is a larger Estate than the Victoria, extending over nearly 2900 acres, 860 of which are under sugar cultivation; and the popularity of these two estates with their Coolies is so well-founded that, as at Prye, at least fifty percent of the indentured immigrants re-engage themselves at the termination of their three years' contract. We unfortunately missed meeting Mr. McDonald, the senior Manager of the Estate, who, not having been ~~[illegible]~~ apprised of our intended visit, happened to be in George Town at the time; but we were received by his Assistant, Mr. R. Ray, a young Scotchman of about twenty, who very favourably impressed me by his behaviour and by the intelligent interest he seemed to show in all matters connected with the Estate.

15. We left Caledonia early in the afternoon for the Batu Kawan River, where we found the steam launch in waiting for us; and arrived at the Bukit Tamboon ferry at 5 p.m. From there to the Batu Kawan Estate was a

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when a servant is fined for neglecting his undeniable duty.

13. Leaving Trans-Kreean early in the forenoon, we crossed the river, and visited the Victoria and Caledonia Estates, on the other side of it. Both of these Estates belong, like Golden Grove, to the Penang Sugar Estates Company, Limited, and adjoin each other. Victoria, which lies nearest to the Krean river, comprises over 1,000 acres, about 650 of which are under cultivation; and is managed, and, apparently, very carefully managed, by Mr. J. McGilveray, a steady and earnest Scotchman of about six and thirty. The Lines, which are about forty years old, are built of brick and mortar, covered with tiles; and, though very comfortable and clean, it is an open question whether they are preferable to the attap arrangements that obtain in other parts of the Province. It was noticeable that there was more rubbish lying about them than we had hitherto seen in those on any other Estate; but the presence of this "matter in the wrong place" was attributed, by Mr. Macgregor, to the fact that it was near the end of the week, and that, according to the ordinance, only on Sundays could the Lines be thoroughly swept and garnished. From the Victoria Lines we drove to the general hospital which is used by the Coolies of the Estate belonging to the Penang Sugar Company and which is situated nearer ~~the~~ Victoria than ~~the~~ Caledonia. Here we found 49 patients — not a large number when the population of these Estates is taken into consideration — nearly all of whom were suffering, as usual, from sores or ulcers caused by chunkful wounds. The hospital was clean, commodious ~~[illegible]~~ and very neatly kept; with an ample dispensary, separate and sufficient wards for women; and an intelligent

long, broad, and very cleanly kept street, with houses à la Prye, and the inevitable gas-lamp in the centre; and I was glad to find that, unlike the Alma and Golden Grove Estates, each married couple had a whole house to themselves. The hospital — which is, perhaps, one of the largest in the Province — struck me as remarkably well suited to insure not only the comfort and well-being of ordinary patients, but their more effectual treatment in the event of epidemics; and the manner in which it is distributed evinces a most commendable care and forethought on the part of Mr. Pulsford, to whom its construction is chiefly due. After I had completed my inspection, I had a long and interesting conversation with Koh-Boo-An, the proprietor of the Estate, who had come over especially to meet me; and I was much pleased with the intelligent interest he appeared to take in the general well being of the coolies, and with his earnestness as a shrewd man of business. It was remarkable, however, that the first complaint he made, when I invited his opinion on the legislation connected with Emigration, was against that most vexatious and most inadequate enactment of Ordinance No. 1 of 1876 — the crying grievance for years of every Planter throughout the Province! — which insists that for every petty neglect or temporary absence the labourer shall be taken by the employer before a Magistrate (who may be sitting eight or ten miles away) to have this fact duly endorsed on his contract; and I was not much surprised to find, on examining the books, that this provision of the law was evaded by a mutual understanding between the cooly and the manager such as obtains in some households in India

forms the southern boundary of Province Wellesley. Crossing over in the ferry we made our way to what is called the Trans-Krian Estate, which we reached as the tardy majority of the coolies were returning home from their work in the fields. The Trans-Krian Estate, which comprises about 1000 acres under sugar cultivation, is owned by Koh-Boo-An, a leading member of the Chinese community in Penang, and is managed, for him, by Mr. Frank Pulsford, who was formerly an officer in the service of the British India Steam Navigation Company, and who appeared to me to be a very intelligent, good natured, and ~~thoroughly~~ sensible man of the world. There were not more than 140 Indian coolies altogether on the Estate: the large majority of labourers being Chinese coolies employed on the Kongsee, or boarding-house, system, under a contractor. The sensible indulgence with which Mr. Pulsford knows how, upon occasion, to relax the rules of discipline was very apparent this evening: for there was a festival going on among the Indian coolies when we arrived, and Davus himself could not more thoroughly have enjoyed "the liberty of December" than did every one of these Klings — as they will persist in calling them in Province Wellesley! — during the night we spent at Trans Krian.

12. Early next morning there was roll-call, which was attended by all those coolies who were not specially exempted; and we then visited the mill (which was working), the Lines, and the hospital — all of which are situated within five minutes of Mr. Pulsford's house. The Lines consist of one

in charge of them, was able to answer satisfactorily every question I put to him. Our visit to the Lines was not so satisfactory. The blocks inhabited by the new coolies were not unlike those on the Alma Estate; while those which were tenanted by the old, or re-engaged, coolies seemed to me especially shabby and comfortless — like some neglected ~~pa~~ paracheery in India. The hospital was like the one I had noticed on the previous evening at Alma — with this special difference that there was a separate ward here for women, and that their treatment was not, apparently, left to themselves. The apothecary, too, a cheerful, good tempered, and very intelligent Bengallee, was a decidedly pleasant contrast to the dull and surly Madrassee lad whom I had met the evening before at Alma; and seemed both to take greater interest in his work and to be better acquainted with his patients. There were 14 coolies in hospital; and their story was the same as that I had heard at Prye and at Alma — chunkul wounds, either wilfully or carelessly inflicted by themselves! On the whole, although the general impression left on my mind by my visits to Alma and to Golden Grove was not exhilarating, there was, after deducting this personal equation, nothing to complain of from the point of view of the Indian immigrants: for there is little doubt that on both of these Estates their condition is superior to what it would have been had most of them remained in their own country.

11. Returning by the Prye Estate, we again took the steam launch, and arrived at 5. p.m. at Kebong Tabal on the Kreean River, which, until recently

striving, against unsuitable circumstances, to live up to his ideal!

10. Leaving Mr. Roberts, late in the evening, we returned to Bukit Tengah; and were the guests, during the night, of the Reverend H. Courtney, the excellent and energetic Resident Missionary of Province Wellesley, who, both by precept and example, is making his influence widely and beneficially felt. Early next morning I walked over to the Golden Grove Estate, within five minutes distance of Mr. Courtney's house; and, as this was one of the two Estates about which we heard so much towards the close of 1881, I paid it particular attention. The Golden Grove Estate belongs to the Penang Sugar Estates Company, Limited; and covers an approximate area of about 1,200 acres, only 500 of which, however, are under cultivation. The Manager Mr. W. H. Walmsley, a man about thirty-five, is the son of a late Veterinary Surgeon of the Madras Army, and appears, like Mr. Roberts, whom, in some of his sadder aspects, he slightly resembles, to have met with many reverses. Like Mr. Roberts, too, he seemed to me to know very little, personally, about his coolies, and to leave every thing to his Assistant, Mr. Thomson, who, however, by no means resembles young Mr. de Mornay. As at Prye, the sugar mill was, for the time being, at a stand-still; but Mr. Walmsley took special interest in demonstrating its working to me. We then went in for his books; and I found that his knowledge on this subject was far more intimate than that Mr. Roberts had vouchsafed to me on the previous evening. The books were written up to date; neatly kept; and the *Kerany*, or clerk

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estate: through the dispirited mill, round and round the Lines, in and out of the hospital, and into the puzzling arcana of his books; and I am bound to say that the information he afforded us, chemin faisant, was both meagre and jejune, while to some of our inquiries he could give no satisfactory answer whatever. His Manager knew all about it! And when his Manager, Mr. de Mornay (a rather heavy looking youth of twenty, who had received his education at Ootacamund) finally appeared, I cannot say that I was favourably impressed by his fitness to control, as he seemed to do, the entire Estate. The coolies, however, seemed contented: they had, at any rate, no complaints to make. Their Lines which looked everywhere as if they were left a good deal to the will of those who inhabited them, and were not, consequently, so neatly kept as those at Prye, were still superior to anything the coolies had tenanted in their own native village; and the hospital, a rather low built but airy arrangement in attap, would in my opinion, have been more decidedly adequate to the necessities of those who use it had it been furnished with a separate ward for women. Management, in fact, on this Estate, was I should say, rather of the masterly inactive kind. The coolies appeared to "gang their ain gait" and to do very much as they pleased — provided of course, they duly propitiated their Tindals or overseers — while Mr. Roberts seemed to fulfil the rôle, as far as they were personally concerned, of an administrative Gallio. It should be mentioned, however, that Mr. Roberts is an ar an I advocate of what he calls "free Emigration"; an[illegible] may possibly be that he is but-

I pushed on, by Bukit Tengah, to Alma, about six miles distant, where we arrived towards the close of the after-noon. The Alma Estate, which is very prettily and healthily situated on the rising ground near the hills which form the frontier of Province Wellesley, comprises about 2600 acres, only 1000 of which, however, are under cultivation: 800 acres being given up to tapioca and 200 to tea. Though thus advantageously situated, its affairs are not, I believe, in a flourishing condition; and Mr. C. L. Roberts — the author of the rather remarkable effusion printed in G.O. No. 372 of the 14th of June last year — has been charged, for some time past, with the ungrateful task of restoring order and promoting prosperity. How far he has succeeded I am, of course, unable to say; but it is evident that the task presses heavily on Mr. Roberts, who is a faded, elderly gentleman, who has, apparently, met much misfortune and experienced many disappointments. I was moved to ask, but I trust with due consideration for his age and position, how it was that the planters of Province Wellesley selected him as their accredited Agent to represent their grievances to our Government, and was informed that it was simply because "he had been in India" — Mr. Roberts having been an indigo planter in Bengal, about a generation ago, and one of the victims of the Nil Darpan riots. Our visit to Alma was as much of a surprise as had been our early morning visit to Prye; and Mr. Roberts was on his way to inspect the engine in the tapioca factory, which had just broken down, when we met him. He received us, however, with fortitude and resignation; and allowed himself to be conducted by us over his estate: through the dispirited mill, round and round the lines, in and out of the hospital, and into the puzzling *arcana* of his books; and I am bound to say that the information he afforded us, *chemin faisant*, was both meagre and jejune, while to some of our inquiries he could give no satisfactory answer whatever. His manager knew all about it! And when his manager, Mr. de Mornay (a rather heavy looking youth of twenty, who had received his education at Ootacamund) finally appeared, I cannot say that I was favourably impressed by his fitness to control, as he seems to do, the entire Estate. The coolies, however, seemed contented: they had, at any rate, no complaints to make. Their lines which looked everywhere as if they were left a good deal to the will of those who inhabited them, and were not, consequently, so neatly kept as those at Prye, were still superior to anything the coolies had tenanted in their own native village; and the hospital, a rather low built but airy arrangement in attap, would in my opinion, have been more decidedly adequate to the necessities of those who use it *had it been furnished with a separate ward for women*. Management, in fact, on this Estate, was I should say, rather of the masterly inactive kind. The coolies appeared to "gang their ain gait" and to do very much as they pleased — provided of course, they duly propitiated their Tindals or overseers — while Mr. Roberts seemed to fulfil the *rôle*, as far as they were personally concerned, of an administrative Gallio. It should be mentioned, however, that Mr. Roberts is an a: an ! advocate of what *he* calls "free Emigration"; an[illegible] may possibly be that he is but

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The whole Lines, in fact, bore unmistakeable evidence of quiet content and comfort. The women and children were cheerful, clean, and well-to-do in appearance; and the manner in which everyone greeted Mr. Brown showed that the relations between master and employer were, here, thoroughly satisfactory. Nor were the spiritual necessities of the coolies neglected; and a large and carefully-kept *goparam*, conveniently situated towards the centre of the Lines, testified to the zeal with which the cult of the tutelary deity was pursued. The Estate hospital which is close to the Lines, is a two storied building of brick and mortar; on the ground floor of *attap*, and of wood above. The upper wards, which are large, cool, scrupulously clean, and admirably ventilated, were tenanted by Indian coolies, nearly all of whom were suffering from slight sores and ulcers, the result of wounds which they had either carelessly or wilfully inflicted on themselves, whilst hoeing or digging, with their *chunkals* or mamooties; and the spacious ground floor was given up to Chinese coolies. Everything here, in the wards, in the dispensary, in the latrines, in the cooking ranges, bore witness of careful, and constant supervision; and the general impression left on my mind, after I had seen the remainder of the Estate, was that the lot of the coolies at Prye was not unlike that of the *fortunatos nimium agricolas* whom Virgil apostrophises. That most of them, however, know their "*bona*" is evidenced by the fact that at least fifty percent of the coolies renew their engagements at the expiration of their three years' term; and that there are more than 180 of them who have, in this way, been from ten to over twenty years on the Estate.

9. Having completed my inspection of the Prye Estate,

parlance a "Surprise visit", Mr. Macgregor not having thought it necessary to send Mr. Eddie Brown any previous notice of our intentions; and we saw it, therefore (as in fact we saw all the other Estates) in its every day, working costume. Mr. Brown was about to go out when we arrived; but he was perfectly contented to sit down again and tell us all about his business, to show us his books, and to explain his "fads" for facilitating work. We then sallied out with him and visited the Mill, the Hospital, and the Lines both of the free as well as of the indentured coolies. The Mill, unfortunately, was not at work, the manufacture of sugar being, generally, at a stand still during this time of the year; but the examination of the complex machinery employed in this business was not without its special interest. The Lines, both of the old and new coolies, which were situated, like the Mill, within a few minutes walk of Mr. Brown's house, were models, in their way, of what such settlements should be, and were infinitely superior to anything of the same kind that any coolie there had ever inhabited in his own country. The streets were spacious and well laid out, so that the air circulated freely throughout the Lines; and the huts, which were built in blocks, afforded ample accomodation for an ordinary native family. They were far higher than anything that Ramasawmy *Counden*, if left to his own devices, would ever have thought of building, and were solidly constructed of *attap*, the dried branch of the nepa palm, which affords a much more comfortable and durable dwelling-house than the very best *cadjan* arrangement of the same kind which we can manage in this country. In front of, and forming part of, each block, was a broad commodious verandah; and within it, and opposite each hut, was the cooking place of each separate family.

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accompanied by Mr. Macgregor, the Protector of
Indian Immigrants, who had very kindly placed
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visit we paid was to the Prye Sugar Estate, very
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and extending over ~~[illegible]~~ 4,000 acres. The proprietors of this
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Province), are Messrs. Walter Scott, David Brown,
J. M. B. Vermont, L. C. Brown, C. A. B. Brown,
and the Executors of the late Mr. James Lamb, a
gentleman who had occupied, and deservedly so, a
large space in the annals of the Colony: having, by
the beneficent energy with which he conducted it
during nearly thirty years, been the making of this
plantation, while he has, at the same time, by the
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he said, "has occasion to congratulate you and the
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"Governor-General of India in Council as communicated
to me in a letter which I caused to be laid before your
"Honourable Council. I am glad to be able now to inform you
that Mr. Buck, Secretary to the Government of India, and
Major Fischer, on the part of the Government of Madras,
have been deputed to visit this Colony and to confer with
me on this question. I have directed that every facility
should be given them to acquire full and correct infor-
-mation. I entertain no doubt but that the interests of
the Indians themselves no less than those of our planters
will best be consulted by a largely increased and
"free immigration under proper safeguards. It is
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"people, which may lead to the ultimate occupation
"of rich lands now waste and the habitations only of
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"climate. I do not doubt but that a satisfactory
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8. I reached Penang the day after the Governor's
speech; and, pending the preparations for my tour
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Malacca, and were officially received by the Hon. C. J.
Irving, C. M. G. the Acting Colonial Secretary and
other representatives of the Government. In the after-
-noon, Mr. Buck and I had a long and most satis-
-factory interview with His Excellency the Governor,
who earnestly expressed, inter alia, his hearty desire
to meet in every possible way the wishes of the Madras
Government; and assured us, at the same time, that
nothing should be wanting on his part to enable us to
visit thoroughly every one of the Settlements, if necessary,
and to form an independent opinion for ourselves of the
actual state of affairs — a promise which was, afterwards,
~~[illegible]~~ fulfilled to the letter. Next-
morning I had another interview with Sir Frederick Weld;
and, as His Excellency was most anxious that we should
see as much as possible of the Straits Settlements, it
was decided that, while Mr. Buck should accompany
the Governor to Malacca and the adjoining Protected
Native State of Sungei Ujong, I should at once return
to Penang and visit (what appeared to be more especially
my department) the Estates and Planters of Province
Wellesley. And at 5 p.m. the same day I left Singapore.
7. On the following day (the 6th of July), there was a meeting,
at Singapore, of the Legislative Council which had been
specially convoked in order to listen to the usual
annual statement which the Governor was in the habit
of making, indicative of the main features of the condi-
-tion of the Colony and of His Excellency's own policy.
In the course of this address, Sir Frederick Weld took an
early opportunity to refer to the mission which had been
sent over to him from this country "I have already"

[illegible] visit to the Prye Estate was what is called in local

day, from early morn to late in the evening, either
Mr. Buck or myself or both of us together were talking
with him. And the conclusion we came to — a conclusion
which further intimacy with him has strengthened
rather than impaired — was that he had, in some
respects, been much misrepresented to us; that the
bluff independence of a self-made man who had
raised himself from "nothing" to the prominent posi-
-tion he now occupies had too often been mistaken
for inveterate obstinacy; and that the means that
had been adopted to "tame him" had not been
exactly judicious. Making, therefore, due allowance
~~from~~ for the early defects in a life (part of which, about
thirty years ago, had been spent in the West Indies),
Mr. Vermont seemed to us to be a thoroughly kind-hearted
~~[illegible]~~ man, willing to do what appeared to him to
be right, but amenable to other reason if properly
appealed to, and ready to co-operate in anything that
tended towards the general good. This opinion has been
confirmed by two separate visits which I subsequently
paid his Estate, and by what I have heard of him
from others, from His Excellency Sir Frederick Weld
downwards; and I may, perhaps, add that in his latest
Annual Report (published in the Straits Settlements
Government Gazette two days before we reached
Penang), Mr. Macgregor says: "On Batu Kawan
"Especially a most marked improvement is now visible
"in the health, general appearance and condition of the coolies.
"The manager is to be congratulated on his success".
[illegible] ut this by the way. Early on the morning of the 4th
[illegible] day we arrived at Singapore, about an hour or
so before Sir Frederick Weld also arrived there from

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spent in acquir us I had a long and most satis-
officials with who – with His Excellency the Governor,
especially from h sed, *inter alia*, his hearty desire
Indian Immigrant ble way the wishes of the Madras
long and searching sed us, at the same time, that
was renewed early" arding on his part to enable us to
wide and yet minu
with emigration wone of the Settlements, if necessary,
-ting the wheat f ndent opinion for ourselves of the
the real from the un s — a promise which was, afterwards,
more on board the ~~[illegible]~~ fulfilled to the letter. Next-
Singapore. interview with Sir Frederick Weld;
5. Among the p was most anxious that we should
at Penang were the ble of the Straits Settlements, it
Council, who had been Mr Buck should accompany
Province Wellesley, or and the adjoining Protected
of Indian Immigrants Ujong, I should at once return
1878; the Hon. G. M. t appeared to be more especially
Member of Council, ares and planters of Province
Province Wellesley P.. the same day I left Singapore.
Hon. J. M. Vermont the 6th of July), there was a meeting,
of Council, the Manolative Council which had been
Batu Kawan Estate to listen to the usual
two years ago. All the Governor was in the habit
with the most ready the main features of the condi-
being especially frank is Excellency's own policy
he and so much about, Sir Frederick Weld took an
duty to study him the mission which had been
-times study a "suspe country" I have already"

Our visit to the Prye Estate was what is called in local

day, from early morn to late in t
Mr Buck or myself or both of us to of our experiences
with him. And the conclusion we co to render these reasons
which further intimacy with him to make it as
rather than impaired — was that l t.
respects, been much misrepresented gether on the 24th of
Pelieff independence of a self-mad spatchly, which
raised himself from "nothing" to the ties, been regularly
-tion he now occupies had too passengers and Emigrants
for inveterate obstinacy; and the ports and those
has been adopted to "tame" him led, under the enlight-
exactly judicious. Making, theref aptain Wilhelm
f ~~from~~ for the early defects in a life ordinary local police
thirty years ago, had been spent delay, occasioned
Mr Vermont seemed to us to be a ally left Negapatam,
~~[illegible]~~ man, willing to do what e ingapore. The
be right, but amenable to other re o native passengers
appealed to, and ready to co-operat ded ample opportunity
tended towards the general good. The ents made by
confirmed by two separate visits (this splendid ship)
paid his Estate, and by what I have and well-being
from others, from His Excellency e lasted only four
downwards; and I may, perhaps, as of the Negapatam
Annual Report (published in the Str); and Mr Buck
Government Gazette' two days endeavouring to learn,
Penang), Mr Macgregor says: "em, as much as
"especially a most marked improvement predilections both
"in the health, general appearance and the free Emigrant,
"The Manager is to be congratulated; a new ordinance
s. But this by the way. Early on the
of July we arrived at Singapore, ang early in the
so before Sir Frederick Weld also and we were received

by the Acting Lie
as he is now state official Governor (or Resident Councillor
who came on board acted) the Hon Major McNair C.M.G.
was limited, the w es off to welcome us. As our stay at Penang
spent in acquir us whole of the day was assiduously
officials with who - iting information from the local
especially from Mr eim we were brought in contact; and,
Indian Immigrant tele Mr Macgregor, the Protector of
long and searching ers, whom Mr Buck subjected to a
was renewed early examination. This investigation
wide and yet minute ar esel morning by Mr Buck, whose
with emigration wor e knowledge of all matters connected
-ting the wheat f was of inestimable value in separa-
the real from the un rom the chaff and in differentiating
more on board the real. At 4 p.m. we were once
Singapore. *Meanatchy*, and on our way to

5. Among the p
at Penang were the assengers we had taken on board
Council, who had been Hon. C. Ironmonger of the Legislative
Province Wellesley, an for some time, a Magistrate in
of Indian Immigra had actually acted as Protector
1878; the Hon. G. M is from October 1877 to October
Member of Council, an andilands, a non-official
Province Wellesley; Chairman of the Penang and
Hon. J. M. Vermont ters' Association; and the
of Council, the mana other non-official Member
Batu Kawan Estate - and past proprietor of the
two years ago. All the hich we heard so much about
with the most ready gentlemen met our inquiries
being especially frank ality, Mr Vermont, in particular,
heard so much about communicative. As we had
duty to study him entleman we made it our
-times study a "Suspe aver the Police must, some-
t: throughout a whole live long
Our visit to the Prye Estate was what is call.

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that led up to it:

Some narrative, however, of our experiences s inevitably necessary in order to render these reasons re intelligible; and I will endeavour to make it as cise as is consistent with this object.

Mr Buck & I left Karikal together on the 24th of ne, in the well-known steamer *Meanatchy*, which ad, during the previous twenty months, been regularly ployed in carrying native passengers and Emigrants and fro between our own southern ports and those the Straits Settlements, and had, under the enlight- ned and beneficient command of Captain Wilhelm Menzell, acquired quite an [illegible] real popu- larity; and, after some unusu ccasioned by unusual circumstances, we f left Negapatam, n the 26th instant, for Penang and Singapore. The *Meanatchy* had on board over 1200 native passengers and Emigrants; and we were afforded ample opportunity for testing the admirable arrangements made by Messrs Katz Brothers (the owners of this splendid ship) for insuring the comfort, convenience, and well-being of every soul on board. The voyage lasted only four and a half days (the average d of the *Meanatchy* being nearly thirteen knots an hour); and Mr Buck and I employed this interval in endeavouring to learn, from personal intercourse with them, as much as possible of the actual experiences and predilections both of the indentured Emigrant and of the free Emigrant, ed in drafting, *sur ces entre faites*, a new ordinance or ces of our Ootacamund note.

The *Meanatchy* arrived at Penang early in the of Sunday the 1st July; and we were received