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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.
PUBLIC DEPARTMENT.

24th September 1877, No. 1265.

Emigration.

Read the following paper:—

No. 78.

Notes on Immigration for the Year ending 30th September 1876.

INDIAN IMMIGRANTS embarked at Calcutta and landed at Trinidad, Births and Deaths on the Voyage, and the Number sent to Colonial Hospital and Convalescent Depot on arrival, during the Season 1875-76.

Ship.	Tonnage.	DATES OF		EMBARKED.			DIED.			LANDED.			COLONIAL HOSPITAL.			CONVALESCENT DEPOT.		
		Embarkation.	Arrival.	M.	W.	B.	G.	Inf.	M.	W.	B.	G.	Inf.	M.	W.	B.	G.	Inf.
<i>Fyle</i> (Dr. Winston).	1,610	10th Aug. 1875	12th Nov. 1875	359	156	44	28	36	617	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
<i>Jovaneur</i> (Dr. Chapman).	1,776	13th Sept. "	26th Dec. "	434	188	24	13	32	663*	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
<i>Genoa</i> (Dr. Thorpe).	840	13th Nov. "	10th Feb. 1876	218	114	18	12	16	378	4	†	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	..			1,011	422	86	55	84	1,668	13	4	..	..	1	91,007	418	86	55
																23	9	2
																45	8	2
																1	1	1

* One born at Immigration Depot.

† Missing supposed to have jumped overboard.

6085

Mortality at Sea.

Deaths at sea on 1673 embarked were 9 = 05 per cent. This is the lowest rate of mortality hitherto recorded in the history of immigration from Calcutta to Trinidad. The precautions taken to ensure health on board, medical as well as dietetic, were all that could be desired, except to a certain extent among the coolies by the *Ganges*, where the progress of syphilitic symptoms, which might have been checked on appearance, were allowed to develop. Otherwise the perfect health which obtained at the depôt in Calcutta during the season, where only 1 child had died, prevailed during the voyage, and has continued pretty much up to date. But this satisfactory state of matters at sea was preceded at Calcutta and followed here on shore by an excess of expenditure altogether due to the disproportionate size of 2 of the ships employed to the small number of coolies annually required by the colony. At Calcutta the recruiters for Trinidad are necessarily few in number and find it difficult to gather at one time a sufficient number of coolies, say for the *Joraveur*, she carries over 670 souls besides her crew. To freight her there must be so large a number gathered in depôt that before it can be completed their daily feeding costs much, and this goes on so long that the people first recruited begin at last to slip away. Should there be any difficulty in getting coolies, as happens to be the case at present, there may also be demurrage. These large ships may no doubt be an advantage in those depôts where a larger number of recruiters is employed during the greater part of the year to recruit the thousands required for Demerara, Natal, &c., but in regard to Trinidad, whose recruiters work during only one-half the year, large ships, as pointed out by the Agent in Calcutta, are at all times a most serious impediment, and may, when coolies are scarce, as at present, amount to a dead-lock. The roomy 'tween-decks are certainly comfortable at sea, as urged by the contractor, but the number of coolies they carry is too great to allow of their being conveniently landed and accommodated at once in the island depôt. The Agent, too, at Calcutta is hurried and cannot so well guard against epidemic influences, such as shipping an incipient case of choleraic diarrhoea duly medicated by an intelligent Baboo, or measles in an early stage of incubation. There are other difficulties connected with the employment of such large vessels for the Trinidad service, but it is unnecessary to enter on them now as the present contract will close with the season 1877-78, and the size of ships to be employed to carry Indian immigrants will be in future limited to a more moderate tonnage.

Mortality on estates = 289 on 9422 under original contract.

This also is comparatively one of the lowest mortality rates hitherto recorded among estates contract people, and may be thus analyzed. On eighteen estates there were no deaths; on twenty-three the rate was at or under 2 per cent.; on thirteen under 3 per cent.; while on the thirty remaining estates the average was 5.7, bringing up the general rate from 2 to 3.05. As the death-rate is now struck over an average of five years, many of the estates in the last class were saved from coming under the mortality clause by the low death-rate of some previous years, and it is clear that without singular freedom from casualties next year the chance of several for new coolies will be then small.

The death-rate average among contract coolies for the last five years was 3.4, or .3 less than in 1875; this number with the 1 per cent. added allowed by the present law makes 4.4. Estates on which, then, the average death-rate equals or exceeds 4.4 are not allowed coolies on their application from the next distribution. The number of such estates is fourteen, thus continuing much the same as during the former mode of allotment, when the exclusion was limited to those estates which exceeded 7 per cent. Of these fourteen only two are fresh names, the other twelve having been equally excluded last year. Should this exclusion continue to offer much longer so marked a contrast to the healthier estates, it will then become a question of simple justice to the immigrant whether he should be exposed to the risk of apprenticeship on such properties where an excessive mortality occurs whether due to unavoidable climatic influences or to culpable neglect. Of course, there may be cases where murder, suicide, &c., or both together may explain to a certain extent an unusually high rate, especially on a limited number of contract servants, but the five years' average will eventually establish in an unmistakable form what estates may be in the interest of the cooly worked by newly-introduced contract labor or left in their entire development to free agency.

Commutation of Return Passage, &c.

Months.	1874-75.					1875-76.				
	Ten Acres.	£5 and 5 Acres.	Women £5.	Total.	To Return.	Ten Acres.	£5 and 5 Acres.	Women £5.	Total.	To Return.
October	9	24	18	51	..	11	72	10	93	29
November	9	23	13	50	..	5	30	19	54	36
December	9	23	18	50	..	3	21	7	31	20
January	10	29	25	64	20	2	47	21	70	19
February	9	36	7	52	14	6	25	4	39	14
March	24	78	31	133	10	3	22	7	37	78
April	15	85	54	154	50	5	15	24	44	42
May	2	80	32	114	42	15	9	15	39	32
June	6	34	17	57	36	4	1	1	6	60
July	1	22	48	71	34	2	1	1	4	9
August	4	30	4	38	10	2	3	1	6	4
September	2	29	5	36	75	5	2	..	7	7
	100	493	277	870	291	68	248	110	426	350

Commutation of Return Passage for Money or Land, or both.

The total number who have preferred settling in this colony during the last year to returning to India is only about half what was registered for 1875 (see tables). This, however, was to have been expected as the option was no longer held out to Indians in their eighth, ninth, and tenth years, but restricted to those who had terminated the contract residence of ten years with tolerably good characters. The floating population also from which the settlers were drawn had been greatly diminished by the numbers who had already taken land, or who sailed in the last ship, and also by the somewhat increasing numbers who during the last year have registered for return passage. To make these tables of time-expired contract servants more complete a column has been added for those who during the same period in each respective month registered to return to Calcutta. The causes assigned do not seem fully to account either for the diminished number taking land or for the increased number registering to leave. They probably lie deeper in connection with the low price of sugar and the remedial efforts lately made to counterbalance this last by stopping the purchase of time and otherwise curtailing privileges hitherto enjoyed by the coolies; at all events the two are coincident.

The preceding tables are accurate only as regards the number of applicants who have been verified and certified at this office as being entitled to the grants of land and money, or money, entered in the corresponding columns for the years 1875 and 1876. But considerable numbers of the men thus verified in both years still await the survey of their lands. Among those who commuted there are a good many coolies who when applying for £5 and five acres had no intention of settling down on such holdings but sold them right off to neighbouring coolies or to neighbouring planters. There are others again of a somewhat similar class who, finding their land distant or troublesome, never returned to their lots after receiving the complimentary £5, and it is generally believed that a number of nomad habits commuted, and now commute with the sole view of drawing the £5 and without intention of ever occupying the corresponding five acres. If this be true, and it is probably so of many, the land might be reserved for those alone who really wish to become small farmers, and the cooly on presenting himself to commute might then be told that he could have his £5 without any previous formality as to land; this offer if responded to would lessen the difficulty of surveying, especially in wet weather, and expedite the commutation. If, however, it be considered proper to hold to the original form of five acres and £5 to the holder when once put in possession, a form which has not been carefully observed, then let the holder, as was done in the earlier stage of this movement, show that he has cultivated a certain proportion of his five acres, and should he at any time fail to pay his ward rates and allow his lots to be levied on for the same, then let the lots lapse to the Crown, otherwise they may become the subject of private barter, and pass to the purchaser for a trifle, after having caused heavy expense to the colony for survey.

The Indians who have commuted up to 1st September 1876 number as follows: 907 men for ten acres, 1073 men for £5 and five acres, and 562 women who took £5 and remained with

their husbands, = in all to 2542 adults with about 3000 children, whose return passage to Calcutta would have cost the colony £45,000.

Return Ship.

Although the *Jumna* did not leave this port till the month of October, she was expected to sail in September as her freight was then ready and the people guaranteed her registered and prepared to start, her departure may be here noticed. She was guaranteed 350 adults, but ultimately embarked 415. Deducting from this number 35 who paid their own passage, there remain 380 to diminish the figure of 630 registered to return in 1874 and 1875 as shown in the tables under the head of Commutation, but, as mentioned, on the sailing of the *Ganges* for India in 1874 there were at that time 214 on the list to return but who for various reasons did not embark. The total number therefore now remaining registered for return passage to India is 464. Many of these may, however, never claim this privilege, and it would both in the interest of the immigrant and the employer reduce the claim within more reasonable limits were a certain time to be fixed for deciding on commutation or return passage, and not as at present allowing either to be made twenty years after it became due. This branch of immigration would be simplified by insisting on the coolie deciding his ultimate status by registering his wish to stay or return within five years after the expiry of his ten years of residence. This would give him ample time to choose and save this department the labor of verifying the status of men who have been living elsewhere for ten or twenty years.

The Indian laborers per *Jumna* took with them in money and bills declared the sum of £12,756-7-0 (\$61,230-48) and an amount of silver and gold about their person much greater than has been seen on any previous occasion. Some of the women seemed cuirassed in coin. This ship was well found and appointed in every way. Only one objection could be made, and that was on the score of safety. Her cargo was coal, which is combustible, and, as no precautions can insure it against ignition under certain conditions, it would be well to exclude such freight in future when 500 lives are on board.

The Indians per *Jumna* were not the only moneyed parties who had improved their sojourn in Trinidad. Five Chinese left in 1876 with their five wives and an aggregate of 12 children for China per Royal Mail Steamers. They took with them a declared value of £3,354-3-4 (\$16,100-00) in money and bills. By the same steamers there also left three Indian coolies, one with wife and two children, taking with them £772-18-4 (\$3,710-00) making altogether with the earnings of the laborers per *Jumna* the respectable sum of £16,883-8-8 (\$81,040-48).

In view of these large earnings or rather savings taken away by coolies—for each person must have paid besides for his living during at least ten years—the question has been raised by the proprietary body as to what extent, if at all, the colony should be made liable for the return passage of those who arrived as children, or who have been born in the colony subsequent to their parents' arrival.

It has been the liberal custom of the country since 1854 to send all such back to India free of charge. This may have been to some extent due to the opinion given by Mr. Caird, the Indian Agent, when he visited this colony about that time, that any difficulty placed in the way of minor children returning to India with their parents might seriously interfere with emigration thence to Trinidad. No legislative step, however, seems to have been taken here in this direction till 1859, when it was enacted that the rules for the introduction of coolies on private bounty should be in all respects similar to those of the Ordinance regulating immigration for 1854, with the proviso that in every case minor children should return to India free of charge with their parents. This was also the law as regarded immigration to Natal and no doubt in consonance with the views of the Court of Directors.

The proprietors here complain, not only of the expense of seven-tenths of this passage being charged directly to the Immigration Fund, but of the considerable loss of labor incurred by the annual, or rather biennial, removal of children, so many being of useful age.

The cost of passage back to Calcutta of these minor children was small compared with the good feeling it cultivated among their parents and friends. The whole number from 1854 to 1876, inclusive, is 520 at an expense of under £5 per head, and it must not be forgotten that any loss of the labor of those among them arrived at years of usefulness was more than met by the introduction into the colony during the same period of 4700 children from Calcutta, of whom a fair proportion have been, and are, utilized on sugar estates at very moderate wages and without any indenture fee, occasionally for several years till their parents' contracts expire. The return, then, of minor children with their parents, free of expense, represents a traditional feeling which should be respected.

But some modification might fairly be made as regards those who have been introduced as minors without any corresponding fixed engagement on their part to meet the cost of their passage either to or from the colony. It might be reasonably expected from them that before getting their passage back to India or commencing it they should be called on to show like their parents an industrial residence of ten years with or without voluntary contract, that is to say, that

such parties should have reached the age of twenty years before being able to decide on the important steps of returning to India or settling here.

Of the thirty-five coolies who paid their own passages by the *Jumna* some were from the French islands and had been domiciled here for eight or ten years, others from English settlements; Trinidad being, as already noted, a centre towards which the coolies gravitate from other colonies; and are, on the whole, a contented or, at least, thriving race. This reacts on their general habits and characterizes their behaviour on the return passage to India as quiet and well conducted, contrasting with the frequent reports of turbulence and insubordination on voyages made by Surgeons-Superintendent with returning coolies from other ports to Calcutta. This is an important fact, and a system which bears such fruit should be modified with a cautious hand.

Absentees.

Total indentured coolies	11,037
Do. absentees	162
	= 1.46 per cent.

Laborers on Estates, 1876.

Under original contract of five years	9,425
Do. endorsement of original contract	69
Do. bounty indenture	1,543
Total indentured..	11,037
Free immigrants resident on estates	Male. 4,057 Female. 1,838 = 5,895
Immigrants' children resident on estates	2,306 1,861 = 4,167
Free immigrants non-resident on estates	3,446 1,218 = 3,664
Creole laborers resident on estates	2,252 1,056 = 3,308
Do. non-resident on estates	2,547 1,093 = 3,640
Total ..	31,111

These figures afford matter for consideration and to a certain extent reflect the position of the colony as regards the export of sugar and, it may be added, of cacao. Those who have been familiar with these reports for years may observe that, however the island crops may have varied, above or below the average, that now in 1876, after a lapse of 13 years, say from 1863, while the export of sugar has increased from 40,000 to 60,000 hhds. the number of Indians under original or five years' contract has remained nearly stationary. This indispensable element of progress is not then to be measured by its numbers but by its value as a tool which enables the possessor to utilize other tools of superior aptitude for various purposes and of gradually increasing numerical power. These are, in the first place, Indian immigrants of previous arrival who have terminated their contract service and may be looked on now in the light of skilled laborers. They were in 1863 only 2045, but have since risen in number, as shown above, to 9559, of whom 5895 reside on the estates which employ them; and, secondly, 6948 Creoles, natives of this or neighbouring colonies. These last, although inferior in numbers and industry to the free coolie, are vastly superior in physical force. On a well-conducted estate the three classes are balanced so that all find their place. The progress of the colony would seem to be linked with this amalgamation at least as regards export of sugar, for there are only some 16 estates in the colony which have this year taken of their crops (5,000 hhds.) with non-contract labor. These, with the cocoa estates, which may be looked on as representing about 15,000 hhds., make together 20,000 hhds., whose producers receive no indentured immigrants from this office, but so far supply their wants from the floating population of the colony, whether Creole or coolie. Their increasing wants have, however, induced the owners of several of the latter estates to apply for new immigrants. As regards these last, although in number they almost equal that of the free coolie, it would be a rather exaggerated estimate to place their effective strength on the same level. One-third of the number are women many of whom have been unaccustomed to bodily labor or endurance of any kind. Each woman must, in the nature of things, count upon serving at least two domestic altars—each may be pregnant or nursing, or looking after older children, or, in the words of the Ordinance, incapacitated by any other physical cause peculiar to women. Under any circumstances the labor of these women is not to be counted on other than as voluntary, and on their first arrival they were always asked by the Agent-General whether they wished to work or not; this preliminary was gradually discontinued as they usually said they would work. Deduct the women, and there remain only 6000 Indians under original contract from whose numerical strength, if the real value of their labor be required, a still large deduction must be made for children between 10 and 15 years of age, and adults in their first year unseasoned as

yet to laborious life. Original contract labor is therefore a weak contingent, in proportion to its number, as compared with the other factors employed in raising the exports of this colony. Still it is the element without which the others would be powerless, while by its aid the fair average crop of 1876, like those of previous years, has been reaped and shipped under the added disadvantage of adverse and showery weather.

Under the Ordinance each cooly is bound to do a certain amount of work in each year of his contract service, viz., 280 days. This is certainly no great amount, and more would be expected from a European, but is more than the average cooly gives, especially in swampy districts. From the abstract of the quarterly returns of estates it will be seen that he does not average more than 200 days, that is, he fails to perform nearly one-third of his agreement, and many, but not all the planters think that he should have to make up this lost time at the close of his five years by extension or endorsement of his contract, and the wish has been expressed, under these circumstances, to assimilate on that point the existing law of Trinidad with that lately framed in Demerara, for making the cooly repay every day he has not worked during his contract. This law has been said to have acted like a charm and removed all the ill-feeling which the cooly harboured against his employer. Before pronouncing on the advisability of this change it may, perhaps, be well to compare the labor conditions of the one colony, even in a cursory manner, with those of the other.

In Demerara by far the larger proportion of the labor is under contract, and some 45,000 indentured laborers turn out a crop of 100,000 hhds.; here we have seen that some 10,000 indentured coolies, with about the same number of free coolies and 7000 Creoles, raise and export 60,000 hhds. of sugar.

To take individual instances, the Schoon Ord Estate in Demerara, a well-conducted property, turned out about the time of the Commissioners' visit a crop of 1500 hhds. sugar, and it was shown that the indentured labor on that estate comprised, among others, 263 effectives who during the previous year had averaged a fraction more than 4 days per week, and that under rules of which at all events the planters did not complain. Here, in Trinidad, during the year ending the 30th September 1876, the Macoya Estate, with a total of 123 indentured servants, turned out 720 42-inch truss hogsheads. While 25 per cent. of these laborers worked 5 days out of crop and 6 days in crop, besides the working of the people generally was such that it made up for the labor lost by non-efficients, such as pregnant women, nurses, &c., whose lost time the estate has been no absentee from this estate, nor complaints to the Magistrate or to the Immigration Office—and only one lad, originally a Railway Clerk in India, availed himself of the privilege of purchasing the balance of his time. This mutually good understanding did not always prevail, for in previous years, when all lost days were endorsed, although the estate paid its way as well or even better than any other, it was at the expense of constant appeals to the Magistrate by the employer and to the Immigration Agent by the people, causing much ill-feeling which culminated in a fatal assault on the Field Overseer. Under the present system the people are cheerful and their willing work has turned out the heaviest crop in the estates' annals. This notwithstanding more than average sickness, the fever cases having reached as high as 39 in one day; such attacks of fever usually repeat themselves and may be followed by longer or shorter periods of convalescence, during which full work cannot be expected.

Is time lost in this way to be endorsed? It is to be hoped not for the sake of humanity, yet the calls for endorsement come principally from those estates where the annual mortality indicates persistent malaria. On the estate in question the present law for the distribution of coolies on arrival has been found amply sufficient for its annual supply. On the adjoining estate of Orange Grove, which shipped 1786 42-inch hogsheads, there were 280 indentured servants in all. Without analyzing more fully its labor list I found on a previous occasion that 60 *bounty* women had averaged over 5 days in the wet season, and 6 days in crop. This was voluntary labor. With such results and under good management, is it desirable to adopt the Demerara clauses in the attempt to remedy the weakness of inefficient management? I say attempt, because the result of full endorsement of lost time will be the same as formerly, for the cooly will look to the fact of his indenture being extended, not to the reason why, and cases of desertion will rise as of old to over 12 per cent. instead of being as now much under 2 per cent. In Trinidad the facilities for evasion not only abound but are especially tempting, small settlers swarm in every direction, Creole as well as cooly, and if the fear of prosecution deterred them from employing the contract vagrant, that fear would not extend to the Spanish Main, to which the fare is only \$2, and where small cocoa estates abound, worked already to a certain extent by coolies. In Demerara the situation is totally different, and the screw may be applied without hesitation to effective and non-effective alike. The cooly will not rashly betake himself either to the swamp behind or the sea in front, while on either side the estates are ruled on the same principles as that to which he is indentured. Before extending the indentures of contract servants on estates where fever is endemic, the terms, if any, on which they should be allotted to such estates should be reconsidered. Under existing rules it is a serious matter that men and women with their families should be allotted for 5 years to places more than usually subject to paludal influence, but the situation becomes still more serious if, at the close of such contract, having survived every risk, they have the hopeless

prospect of finding that contract extended for one or more years. There are, of course, determined idlers, religious or otherwise, who will not work; against these, if it be thought advisable, the Demerara clauses in such case provided might be adopted.

Labor from the neighbouring Colonies.

In the year ending 30th September 1876 the number introduced under this heading, after deducting those who left the colony, was 5870, much the same as in the previous year, so that it may be assumed that the population of Trinidad has been thus increased during the last five years by a number of adults equal to the whole number of young and old emancipated in 1838. Although this immigration is usually in the first instance wandering and desultory, having no fixed views beyond the general inducement of public works and higher estates wages than are current in the places they leave, still a sufficient number either filter through to estates work or displace others in that direction, a movement which sufficiently explains the facts that with favorable weather the crops in Trinidad are reaped with such a moderate amount of contract labor, and that during the last year three or four new estates with powerful machinery were being added to the number already embarked in the struggle with Continental and Cuban export.

H. MITCHELL,
Agent-General of Immigrants.

NOTE.—The climatic features of every country with its conformation must determine the characteristics of its agriculture. In this respect Demerara and Trinidad are widely dissimilar. Demerara is more or less flat, while in Trinidad there are only ten or a dozen estates with levels running to the sea-board. These last, under the united influence of tidal reflux and tropical heat, are at certain seasons extremely unhealthy, and their heavy mortality has from time to time excluded them from the annual distribution of coolies. On these estates there was only one where the mortality did not exceed the limits laid down by law as excessive, and the exception merits especial note with reference to the question of endorsement, for during the period of wholesale endorsement, extending from 1854 to 1871, the planting Attorney of that estate steadily declined to enforce lost time against his contract servants, and yet the estate has steadily cleared money. He no doubt understood that when the average standard of health is lowered by any cause, immaterial what, the average amount of labor cannot be forthcoming, nor could any stringency of rule under such conditions exact from the Indian laborer a larger amount of work than his natural thirst for money can induce. Again, during the currency of the long endorsements, the death-rate on three or four of the largest of these estates ranged for several years as high as 12 per cent., while during the last five years of limited endorsement it has not averaged 6 per cent. on the same estates or even reached the line of excessive mortality, which excludes from the annual distribution of Indian immigrants.

H. M.

No. 159.

Copy forwarded to the Government of Madras for information in continuation of endorsement, No. 283, dated the 29th September 1876.

(By order.)

DEPT. OF REV., AGRI., AND COMMERCE
(EMIGRATION), SIMLA, 8th September 1877.

(Signed) C. J. LYALL,
Under Secy. to the Govt. of India.

No. 79. ORDER THEREON, 24th September 1877, No. 1265.

Communicated to the Revenue Department, to the Board of Revenue, and to the Protector of Emigrants.

(True Extract.)

Chief Secretary.

To the Revenue Department.
" Board of Revenue.
" Protector of Emigrants.

Exd. A. S. Rodgers.

Revenue Report

Sept 29/73
Bodt. of 1877 3000000.

PUBLIC.

To
THE REVENUE DEPARTMENT.
Ac. Ac. Ac.

Dated September, 24th.

Issued *9th*

Recd. *5 Oct 2000*

G.O., 24th September 1877, No. 1306.

SEPTEMBER.
Nos. 78-79.

Indigestion—Communicating endorsement of
Government of India forwarding copy of Annual
Report of the Agent-General of Immigrants,
Printed, for 1876.

Sept 29/73
Sept 29/73
Sept 29/73