

AcN 16312

**SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY'S LIBRARY
PUNE 411 004
FOR INTERNAL CIRCULATION**

To be returned on or before the last date stamped below.

17 APR 2006

REPORT

ON THE

CONDITIONS OF TEA GARDEN LABOUR

IN THE

DUARS OF BENGAL, IN MADRAS, AND IN CEYLON.

BY

J. C. ARBUTHNOTT, Esq., C.I.E., I.C.S.,
OF THE ASSAM COMMISSION.



SHILLONG :

PRINTED AT THE ASSAM SECRETARIAT PRINTING OFFICE.

1904.

X9(J451):9.262.N

D4
15312

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

PART I.—THE DUARS.

	PAGE
1. Introductory remarks	1
2. Number of tea gardens. Acreage. Approximate strength of labour force	<i>ib.</i>
3. Extent to which local labour is available	<i>ib.</i>
4. System of recruitment	3
5. Cost of importation	4
6. Absence of labour laws	<i>ib.</i>
7. Wages	<i>ib.</i>
8. Tasks	5
9. Cost of living	<i>ib.</i>
10. System on which labour on estates is organized and controlled	6
11. Permanence of labour force	<i>ib.</i>
12. Settlement of land with estate coolies	7
13. Vital statistics	<i>ib.</i>
14. Housing. Medical arrangements. Water-supply	8
15. Labour rules	<i>ib.</i>
16. Labour supply	9
17. Relations between employers and employed	<i>ib.</i>

PART II.—MADRAS.

18. Number of gardens. Acreage. Approximate strength of labour force	<i>ib.</i>
19. Extent to which local labour is available	<i>ib.</i>
20. System of recruitment	10
21. System of advances	11
22. Cost of importation	<i>ib.</i>
23. Contracts	<i>ib.</i>
24. Wages and tasks	<i>ib.</i>
25. Cost of living	12
26. System on which labour is controlled and organized on estates	<i>ib.</i>
27. Permanence of labour force	13
28. Colonization	<i>ib.</i>
29. Vital statistics	<i>ib.</i>
30. Housing, medical arrangements, water-supply	14
31. Relations between employers and employed	<i>ib.</i>
32. Labour laws	<i>ib.</i>

PART III.—CEYLON.

33. Number of tea gardens, acreage, approximate strength of labour force	15
34. Extent to which local labour is available	16
35. Statistics of importation	<i>ib.</i>
36. System of recruitment	17
37. Coolie routes	18
38. Emigration arrangements. "Tin ticket" system	<i>ib.</i>
39. Absence of restrictions on emigration from Madras. Cost of importation. Contracts	19
40. Cost of living and wages. Tasks	20
41. System of organization and control of labour on estates	21
42. Permanence of labour force	22
43. Settlement of estate coolies	<i>ib.</i>
44. Vital statistics. Housing. Water-supply	<i>ib.</i>
45. Medical arrangements	23
46. Labour laws. Inspection	24
47. Labour supply	<i>ib.</i>
48. Relations between employers and employed	25

✓PART IV.—CONCLUSION.

49. Assam system compared with those described above	26
50. Peculiarity of Assam system	27
51. The labour laws of Assam	<i>ib.</i>
52. Suggestions for improvement of labour laws	28
53. Repatriation	29
54. Simplification of transit and depôt rules	<i>ib.</i>
55. The deterrent effect of a long period of indenture	30
56. Government restrictions upon recruiting	<i>ib.</i>
57. Free <i>versus</i> indentured labour	31
58. Explanation of the high cost of labour in Assam	<i>ib.</i>
Appendices	35—47

REPORT

ON THE

CONDITIONS OF TEA GARDEN LABOUR

IN THE

DUARS OF BENGAL IN MADRAS AND IN CEYLON.

PART I.—THE DUARS.

The Duars comprise the submontane tract ceded to the British Government, after the Bhutan war in 1864, and constitute the non-Regulation portion of the subsequently-formed Bengal district of Jalpaiguri.

2. The history of the Duars as a tea-growing area dates from the year 1874. The statement illustrative of the state of tea cultivation for the calendar year 1902 gives the number of plantations or gardens at 223 (Appendix No. 1). These figures, however, refer to grants. The number of tea gardens in the Jalpaiguri District Register is 105, and the acreage under tea is 76,229 acres. The total number of persons shown as employed during the year 1902 is 61,784, of whom 38,218 are returned as permanently employed. The average daily number temporarily employed is given as 23,566.

The Director-General of Statistics noticed the decrease in the number of permanent employes in 1902, and the Honorary Secretary, Duars Planters' Association, to whom the matter was referred, attributed the diminution (i) to the demand for labour in other parts of India for mining, railway construction, dockyards, etc.; (ii) return of labourers to their homes with savings; (iii) settlement of labourers as colonists in the Duars. It was observed that, as a fact, many gardens had to work with less than half a coolie per acre during the greater part of the year, and that the drop from the two previous years was about 9,000 coolies, or an average of 100 coolies over some 90 gardens. Complaints as regards scarcity of labour are general, but it must not be inferred from these figures that the actual labour force available or resident on most gardens is below one coolie per acre. No returns are submitted to Government except the statement referred to (Appendix No. 1); but, from figures supplied by the courtesy of Managers and Superintendents, it appears that the average force on a number of representative gardens (with an acreage of 8,000 acres) was 1.26 throughout the year. Under a free labour system, with a force which fluctuates considerably according to season, it would not be possible to obtain accurate figures for the whole district in a limited time.

The tea garden population is returned in the Census of 1901 at 133,207, having more than doubled since 1891, when the figures were 61,983.

In Assam children form 38.4 per cent. of the total labour force. On a similar basis, it is probable that the adult force, in the wide acceptation of the term, is not less than one coolie per acre in the Duars; though, in the absence of labour laws, the average coolie working force per acre appears to be considerably less than on some gardens in Assam.

3. Strictly speaking, there is no local labour. The Mech has retired before civilisation, and the Rajbangshi, who forms the bulk of the indigenous population, will not do field work, though he may thatch or take a contract for huts. A few gardens employ Nipalese or Paharia labour; one or two, which are practically in the hills, work almost wholly with hill labour; but, as a whole, the Duars gardens are dependent on labour imported from a distance. Temporary assistance is obtained at times from coolie immigrants from Chota Nagpur, Uraons, Mundas, and Santhals, settled in the

villages, who were originally imported, and some gardens settle *jote* lands with such villagers on condition that labour is supplied when they are not cultivating or harvesting their own crops. But the supply is precarious. Still, the labour is to be had at times. A 1,200-acre garden visited obtained 70 or 80 villagers to pluck for six weeks or two months last rains. It is understood that by the villagers are meant coolies who would be classed as time-expired in Assam. Hillmen come in numbers during the cold weather to the low-lying gardens to cut jungle and fuel, and to sickle, *i.e.*, clear weeds or grass among the bushes preparatory to hoeing. The great majority of gardens are, however, dependent for their labour on the aboriginal labourers imported from the districts of Chota Nagpur and Santhalia, and resident on the estates. The Duars, in fact, have been colonised by these immigrants, and it is hoped that in the future, the labour difficulty will receive a local solution. No returns are submitted to Government as regards the number of coolies annually recruited or imported, but Managers and Superintendents have kindly supplied figures for three years with reference to 67 estates, with an acreage of 52,703 acres, or rather more than two-thirds of the total area under tea. The bulk of the labour force from 60 to 70 per cent. is recruited from Chota Nagpur. Separate figures have been given for the recruiting centre of Chaibassa, the headquarters station of the Singhbhum district of Chota Nagpur, for coolies recruited in that quarter. As regards the Santhal parganas, the figures in some instances include labour recruited in the Monghyr district. Coolies from the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh will not live in the Duars. Some gardens have recruited from Ganjam, but apparently not with much success. The majority of the labourers are Uraons, who are the best class of "junglies," and form the backbone of the force.

The Census figures for 1891 give the number of Uraons in the district at 20,051, while Mundas numbered 2,732 and Santhals 1,409. The Census figures of 1901 show 62,844 Uraons, 11,672 Mundas, and 10,857 Santhals. These persons are not, of course, all employed on tea gardens, but the figures indicate sufficiently the proportion of the aboriginal immigrants from Santhalia and Chota Nagpur, and the increase from a total of 24,192 to 85,373 in a decade is a sufficient indication of the successful colonization of the Duars through the tea industry under a free labour system. The population of the district of Jalpaiguri has increased between 1872 and 1901 from 417,855 to 787,380 in less than 30 years.

4. The system on which labour is recruited and imported into the Duars may be thus briefly described:—A sirdar in the Duars draws commission on the number of coolies he sends daily to work. The commission is usually 1 pice on the *hasiri* or task, except on some gardens, where a higher commission is paid, 2 pice being the maximum. The sirdar either goes himself, or selects, with the Manager's approval, suitable men from his own "patti" or gang to send down as recruiters. If he proceeds to the recruiting district himself, he generally takes men with him from his own gang to recruit on his behalf; usually men recruited the season before, who have not lost touch with their villages. The garden advances the railway fare and diet money down, which is debited against the sirdar's account. In any case, the sirdar is responsible for all advances given to his recruiters, who each receive about Rs. 10 to start with. If the man fails to return, the sirdar has to refund the money. The recruiters receive further advances in the recruiting district, and for road or rail expenses, and food for the return journey at the final rendezvous. The coolies are not taken to any depôt, but camp out. After the recruiters have proceeded to the recruiting district, an Assistant Manager—in some cases the garden Babu—is sent down after an interval of a fortnight or three weeks. He goes to the different centres, calls in and interviews the recruiters, ascertains the prospects, and makes advances as necessary from time to time. Finally, at the most convenient centre, the coolies are inspected, advances checked, final advances given, and the coolies despatched either by road or rail,—arrangements being sometimes made with the Railway Companies for through passes. Formerly, it was the rule to proceed by road, but many estates now find it more satisfactory and economical to take rail on account of losses through desertion or cholera *en route*, and to save time. Some gardens pay the difference in fare between road and rail. The actual cost of recruitment, which includes expenditure on account of the pay of the Manager or assistant on deputation and his staff, of course, is not recoverable. If the recruiters return with a number of coolies, the sirdar's perquisite is his daily commission paid on the coolies' earnings. He also receives a commission of Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 per head. If the recruiter selected by him, on the other hand, fails to return, the sirdar has to refund the advances to the estate. Advances in the recruiting districts represent money given to new coolies to pay off debts in their country, road expenses, and sundry. The sirdar is responsible for these amounts, and in turn recovers from the coolies monthly and proportionately. As a rule, no recruiting is done

through outside agency. In most cases the recruiters do not draw pay during their absence, but receive a commission of Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 a head on the coolies brought up, which is generally paid in the following October at the commencement of the next recruiting season. In Assam, a similar arrangement is made in the case of Kachari labour with their duffadars. On other gardens, the recruiters receive deferred pay for the period they are away after they return with their coolies to the estate.

The sirdar really has no security while the gang is on its way from the recruiting district, and losses are not infrequent when coolies come by road. On the gardens it is to the interest of the sirdar to see that the coolies do a full day's work and that they do not abscond, but it is said they are often lax in these respects. A system of intelligence, however, among themselves often enables sirdars to ascertain where their coolies are, to trace absconders, and so recover advances from other gardens. Actually, there is no security, but the methods apparently ensure *bond fide* recruitment of gangs who are known to the recruiter, or are related to him or other coolies on the garden. As a rule, single men are not sent down to recruit. The recruiter in most cases leaves his wife and family on the garden, and sirdars generally possess property in cattle, carts, and buffaloes. Some sirdars draw as much as Rs. 30 or Rs. 40 a month in commission, and in the event of the sirdar proceeding himself to recruit, his commission on his coolies left on the garden might be kept in hand. Recourse is rarely had to civil litigation, the distance, time, and expense being prohibitory. From 50 to 300 rupees would represent the range of advances to sirdars. Occasional instances occur in which the losses sustained on recruitment advances are considerable; but, on the whole, if not to be disregarded, such losses are, and should be, regarded as an incidental item of recruiting expenditure. Losses occur when a recruiter obtains a bad lot of coolies, who abscond on arrival, or brings up coolies who do not belong to him or have relations and friends on other gardens. This may or may not be recovered from the sirdar, who on occasion himself absconds if the account against him becomes in his opinion too heavy. Losses are chiefly in Sonthal and Chaibasa recruiting. In one instance, a loss of about Rs. 3,000 occurred, in which the advances against the coolies ranged from Rs. 17 to Rs. 20 a head. This resulted in the coolies absconding, and the majority could not be traced. An experienced Superintendent considers that coolies will not remain on a garden if the advances on the average much exceed Rs. 10 a head. Another Superintendent estimated the advances outstanding against 1,500 coolies at Rs. 3,000, and that the average per new coolie did not exceed Rs. 5 a head on his gardens. New gardens which have not established a connection are more likely to lose on recruitment advances. A certain amount of risk, of course, is inevitable. An estimate of Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000 a year would perhaps be a fair average on a 1,000-acre estate, including advances to local labour Paharias and Gharamies. When a sirdar is unfortunate, it is necessary and politic to write off and accept some of the loss, as, for instance, should an epidemic occur on the way up or on the garden. It is good policy to assure other sirdars that they will be fairly dealt with in similar circumstances. In good recruiting years the amount risked is larger. In one considerable Company irrecoverable advances ranged from Rs. 1,728 in 1898 to Rs. 374 in 1901, but the former figure is exceptional.

Owing to scarcity of labour, recruitment is being tried by some estates through ordinary recruiting agency in districts with which the garden has no existing connection, no coolies on the estate from the particular locality. The method adopted is the importation of a few coolies who visit the garden and return to recruit. There have been some instances in which coolies have been imported under section 492 of the Indian Penal Code (on Ganja), but the courts apparently refused to enforce the contracts when the coolies absconded. There is no Government supervision as regards emigration to the Duars. Restrictions exist as regards recruiting in the Tributary Native States which are considered irksome as closing the door to a fine field for recruitment, in view of the depletion of the Chota Nagpur districts. The treatment of coolies *en route* to the gardens is not regulated by any special provisions of law. It is said that there were complaints some years ago as regards official attitude in the Sonthal Parganas. On the other hand, it is admitted that every assistance was and is being given in the districts of Chota Nagpur, which continues to be the chief recruiting ground for the Duars.

5. The approximate cost of importing coolies per head, and the principal items of the cost, may be gathered from statements (Appendices Nos. 3 and 4). The cost, owing to scarcity of labour, has risen considerably within the last few years. 1897 was an exceptionally good year, but the supply has been very short for the last three years. The Secretary, Duars Planters' Association, states there was a fair labour force till 1897, but

that from 1900 onwards the force has declined, owing to the competition of coal mines, demand for dock labour, railway construction, and the settlement of coolies on Government lands in the district. In 1899, 1,400 coolies were imported by a leading Company from Chota Nagpur at a cost of Rs. 2-6-9 *per capita* irrecoverable, and Rs. 10-14-4 average advances, all recoverable from coolies and sirdars. In 1903 the same Company recruited 531 coolies from Chota Nagpur, Advances recoverable amounted to Rs. 8,274-10-6, expenditure over and above to Rs. 5,512-15, or Rs. 10-6-1 *per capita* irrecoverable. It is therefore clear that in these instances advances on recruiting have risen from Rs. 10-14-4 in 1899 to Rs. 15-9-3 in 1903, while the expenditure which is recoverable has advanced from Rs. 2-6-9 *per head* in 1899 to Rs. 10-6-1 in 1903. In 1897, 369 recruiters recruited 3,118 coolies for these estates, the advances on the garden amounting to Rs. 5,801 and in the recruiting district to Rs. 2,448. This year it is estimated for the Duars generally that the average result from Chota Nagpur may be as low as 1 coolie per recruiter and will probably not exceed $1\frac{1}{2}$.

It is not easy to arrive at exact figures, as losses on advances must be taken into consideration, but it is safe to assume that the cost even now is less than one-tenth of the price paid for a similar class of coolie in Assam. A few gardens have kindly supplied figures showing the number of recruiters despatched in 1901, 1902, and 1903, with the number of coolies recruited in each year from Chota Nagpur and the Sonthal Parganas.

6. The Duars is a free labour district, and the coolies' services are not secured by any form of agreement. No labour laws are in force. *Absence of labour laws.* The few attempts to import labour under section 492, Indian Penal Code, do not appear to have been successful. There are, therefore, no provisions in force as regards the rate of wages or supply of food grains. Rice, however, is occasionally imported and sold to the coolies at a rate below the market value to keep down bazaar prices in time of scarcity.

7. The general rate of wages (Appendix No. 8) paid to men, women, and children throughout the district is Rs. 6, Rs. 4-8, and Rs. 2-8 *Wages.* calculated on the actual working days in the month. A few gardens pay at the rate of Rs. 6-8, Rs. 5, and Rs. 3. A proposal to pay higher wages during the rains and a lower rate in the cold weather was considered, but nothing definite resulted. Some allowance is made in the case of new coolies on some estates. Otherwise, there is no difference in the rate of wages as regards out-door labour, but tea-house hands are on a sliding scale, length of service and skill with regard to machinery being taken into consideration. In a report written in 1900 the Deputy Commissioner estimated that the average earnings of the most industrious out-door male labourer would not reach as high a figure as Rs. 7-8 a month, and that the average amount of money wages actually drawn from the garden by the average coolie man was Rs. 60 a year or thereabouts. Coolies temporarily employed are paid at the same rates as others if employed on such work as plucking and hoeing, but outsiders who cut fuel or build houses are paid at contract rates. Men's work is practically confined to hoeing and pruning, but on some gardens they are largely employed to pluck from August onwards. Most gardens become jungly towards the autumn, and hill labour is employed to keep them clean. It is only in the plucking season that women can earn extra pay. There is no rate for children, unless they pluck into their own baskets, when the rate is usually Rs. 1-3, occasionally Rs. 3. Children's pluckings go into the mother's basket, and she draws cash on the excess amount.

8. The questions of tasks is a difficult one, varying according to circumstances. *Tasks.* As regards hoeing, the usual task is 12 to 15 *luggees* deep hoeing, and 30 *luggees* light hoeing. A *luggee* = 12 feet x 12 feet. A strong coolie could perform his task in the rains in about four hours. It would take longer on hard soil in dry weather. An inferior coolie might take half as long again. In pruning, the rate varies according to the size and age of the bushes, and the style adopted. About 6 or 7 hours would represent the average task, though a good worker might finish in 5 hours or even less. Figures showing the number of scers required to be plucked are misleading. The amount varies according to season, the method, coarse or fine, and the species of leaf. For instance, three times the quantity of indigenous leaf can be plucked in comparison with China. Adjoining gardens may happen to pluck on different systems so that the quantity of leaf affords no criterion. It is estimated that a good plucker working nine hours a day in the height of the season can double her monthly wages, and in some instances exceed this, and for three months in the year

earn six or seven rupees extra a month. Generally speaking, overtime pay is only given in the season from May to November to men for hoeing, and to women for plucking. From statistics of wages for the year 1899 obtained in 1900, compared with statistics supplied through the courtesy of Managers and Superintendents, there does not appear to be much variation in the last three or four years. In this connection, it is important to remember the difference between free and Act labour. The Deputy Commissioner in 1900 estimated that coolies in the Duars do not work more than 18 or 20 days on the average in the month. It is commonly asserted that the men work well for four hours, but that, if attempts are made to exact much heavier tasks dissatisfaction results, and the coolies may strike or proceed to other estates where the tasks are easier. It is clear that under a free labour system, the coolie is much more master of the situation. Managers of Assam experience feel this, and complain of the quantity and quality of work vouchsafed. The majority of Duars planters, however, prefer their own system and desire no labour legislation. There is, therefore, always the competition of other gardens as a check on excessive tasks. If the work is not done well, the *hasiri* and the sirdar's commission can be stopped, or no more work given until the previous day's task is completed. The fact appears to be that the coolies will only work for *ticca*, and frequently the difficulty, as with Kachari labour in Assam, is to ensure that the task work is properly performed. A harvest law under which the labourer would be compelled to work throughout the season until the crop is gathered, is not without its advocates. But the general opinion is that the introduction of agreements or contracts might disorganise labour, and would certainly exercise a prejudicial effect on recruitment. A comparison of the figures showing the actual coolie force per acre and the average coolie working force per acre will indicate the difference in the working of the two systems more clearly than anything (Appendix No. 5).

9. It may be generally asserted that the cost of living in the Duars is greater than in Sylhet and Cachar and less than in some parts of the Assam Valley, for instance, the district of Lakhimpur.

Cost of living. Statements are annexed, giving the average price of rice in 1901, 1902, and 1903 at Jalpaiguri and Alipur, the subdivisional headquarters of the more recently opened gardens to the east, as well as figures for the same years as regards the tea districts in the Province of Assam (Appendices Nos. 6 and 7). 1901 was an exceptionally dear year everywhere. Though rice is cheaper than in certain localities in Upper Assam, luxuries are dear. Fish is scarcely to be obtained. In the Daina-Torsa sub-district, which occupies a central position between the older gardens to the west and the more recent in Alipur Duar, milk sells at two annas a seer, potatoes at one anna six pies, dall two annas six pies, salt 2 annas. Large fowls cost 8 annas each, eggs 6 pies, kids Rs. 3.

10. As already observed, sirdars in the Duars draw a commission on each task up to a maximum of two pice, and in a manner may be said to own the coolies who have been recruited by themselves or by their nominees, recruiters selected by them with the Manager's approval from among their own gang. If a sirdar owns or controls a sufficient number, 30 or 40 coolies, he is allowed a duffadar, whom he selects subject to approval, to look after his interests. The duffadar, however, is paid by the garden and is held responsible, and cut for bad work. He is often an intelligent man from the sirdar's gang, or a sirdar may be his own duffadar. On the other hand, a sirdar may work as a coolie among his own gang, but in any case he gets his commission. The duffadar supervises the work of the gang, and may, if sufficiently intelligent, keep a note of individual work to be noted in the garden register afterwards. If the coolies' names are not shown individually in the register, an unofficial note is kept to check the sirdar and settle disputes. Under the pure sirdari system, which was the original method, no note was kept, but it is generally considered more satisfactory to have a record for reference and check. Coolies are usually paid monthly through their sirdars, and their sirdars either advance them money themselves or recommend advances, the sirdar in the latter case being responsible. *Ticca* pice for plucking over and above the *hasiri* are paid direct. On some estates a chaprasi, head duffadar, or bahidar, in the case of hill coolies is employed to supervise the duffadars, and keep the field or rough account of work done by the gang. This acts as a check on the duffadar and sirdar. Sometimes a munshi or outdoor native assistant is employed to supervise the whole, and write up the rough report, which is signed by the Manager or assistant in the evening before entry in the *pacca* report book from which the *hasiri* book is written up by the office establishment. The manager or assistant exercises a general supervision, attends to any particular work of importance, sees that the number of coolies is actually employed, superintends the outdoor labour as a whole; but the sirdari system in the Duars does not appear to involve the same personal contact with the individual labourer as the system in force in Assam, and there is no doubt that

with free labour it is not possible to obtain the same quantity or quality of work or to exercise the same personal and particular control over a labour force which is not bound by more or less severe penal laws. It is not the practice for instance to muster the coolies in the morning before they proceed to work. Usually, the orders for the following day are entered in a book in the evening and made over to the outdoor native assistant. Some managers consider that more European supervision is required, as the subordinate native staff are necessarily interested under the system described. For example, a sirdar may be a duffadar or a well-to-do sirdar may be a head duffadar over a number of duffadars, and so be naturally interested in allowing his own coolies an easy time. It is admitted that there is considerable difficulty in enforcing tasks and in securing good and constant work under the Duars system, and there is no doubt that the successful working of a Duar's garden requires considerable tact, discretion, and management. It is not to be supposed, however, that an elaborate system of check does not exist. The number of bushes and acreage in every block is known and work is most carefully checked in the office. The duffadar is responsible for returning the exact amount, and he has to pay the difference if more *habiris* or men employed are shown than are required.

11. As regards the period for which coolies remain in garden employ it is not easy to obtain precise information. Coolies used to come up for about three years and then take long leave, but now-a-days they do not return to their country so frequently as before. There is a tendency to settle down. The Duars in fact have been colonized by Chota Nagpur coolies. Uraons are keen cultivators, and have settled to a great extent in the district. On old established gardens a number of coolies have been born on the estate. Generally speaking, on most gardens the bulk of the labour force is permanent, though a certain proportion return to their homes every year. On this subject the Deputy Commissioner wrote in 1900 as follows:

Although a certain percentage of coolies move freely from garden to garden, either from a desire for change or belief that change of air is a preventive of malarial fever or some trivial motive, there is always a very considerable residuum, more especially on long established gardens, which does not find it easy to move. In these gardens one finds numbers of coolies who have become practically permanent residents. They have been living on the same plots of land for a number of years, and have a house superior to the average found in coolie lines, with a well-cultivated plot of land of their own on the garden property. A migration to another garden would entail the loss of all this, and naturally it takes a good deal to move them. Again, a coolie has taken advances from the garden and has not repaid it, or the garden has lent him money to buy a pair of bullocks, taking the animals themselves as security. This is a very common practice. As long as the coolie remains on the garden the manager is not likely to be hard on him, but if he attempts to leave for another garden he could not hope for any consideration. He, therefore, is practically bound to stop where he is.

A representative estate near Mal had 900 working coolies on the books on 1st November. Of these, 78 proceeded on a visit to their homes and 38 were sent to recruit. It was said that the majority of the 78 would not return. A few might, but others, friends and relatives, would return in their stead. The remittances made were considerable. The number of coolies returning to their homes is greater after a good harvest in Chota Nagpur. Another Superintendent estimates the average time a coolie remains on an estate at three years and seven or eight to enable him to buy land and settle down in the district. He, however, considered the Uraon to be an improvident person, and given to spending much on eating and drinking. It may be roughly estimated that 10 per cent. of the labour force is constantly on the move. The impression that the bulk of any labour force visit their homes annually in the cold weather to return after the harvest is over, is, however, incorrect, whatever may have been the case formerly. No figures are available as regards the area of land taken up by coolie immigrants in the Duars, but the rapid and successful colonization of the tract is a patent fact.

12. Labour is attracted from the villagers sometimes by settling garden *jote* lands with cultivators of the coolie class who in Assam would be classed as time-expired labourers, on condition that they supply labour to the garden. It is not, however, a general practice to settle land direct with coolies resident on the estate. In some instances land is settled with sirdars who may make their own arrangements with their coolies. In one company the sirdars hold 500 acres at Rs. 5 per acre, the condition being that they supply a certain number of coolies per acre held. This, however, is an unusually large area. Much depends on the situation of the estate. Gardens near the hills have little land to offer. When sirdars hold garden lands it is generally with some condition attached as regards supply of labour or non-interference with labour if required for the garden. At present the settlement of coolies in the villages is regarded as a great drain on garden labour,

but it is hoped that in the future this will redound to the advantage of estates favourably situated.

13. The **Chaukidari Act** is not in force in the tea gardens in the Duars. The **chaukidars** who are responsible for reporting births, deaths, crime, etc., to the nearest police station once a week are maintained under a special arrangement and paid by the estates. The district reports comment favourably on the general health and sanitary arrangements on gardens, but it is observed that in many instances the work of the **chaukidars** is unsatisfactory, and that the authorities have very little control over them. The report for 1900 which was an unhealthy year, states that the total number of deaths reported from tea gardens during the year was 3,925, or 5.76 per mille on the district population (630,736), the increase being due to outbreaks of cholera and small-pox on some estates. Of 33 gardens who reported a death-rate in 1902, six returned 4 per cent., and over and two returned a death-rate of 6 per cent. and 7.25, respectively. The malarious climate of the Duars is notorious. Europeans and natives of a superior class are attacked by a malignant and fatal form of fever to which, from the symptoms, the name of blackwater fever has been given. It appears, however, that the aboriginal races from Chota Nagpur and the adjacent tracts, if not immune, are not by any means so subject to this special form of disease. Reliable statistics are not obtainable, but the unhealthiness of the Duars can be gauged from the following table, which has been extracted from the District Census Report for 1901, according to which the death-rate for the district of Jalpaiguri reached the high average of 36.5 per mille for the decade 1891-1900, and was 45.2 per mille in the last year of the series. The report adds that, while the influence of epidemic diseases, such as cholera, smallpox, etc., was an almost negligible factor, the general unhealthiness of the district is indicated by the unvarying high death-rate from fever which averaged 32.7 per mille. The Duars, which form the Non-Regulation portion of the district, returned an average death-rate from all causes of 39.9 per mille, against a birth-rate of 33.3:—

Jalpaiguri district.					Remarks.
Year.	Deaths.		Births.		
	Number reported.	Ratio per mille.	Number reported.	Ratio per mille.	
1891	28,186	41.3	23,087	33.8	Registration not introduced. Average of nine years taken. Low figures probably due to faulty registration.
1892	23,685	34.7	17,219	25.2	
1893	20,530	30.1	25,092	36.8	
1894	25,263	37.0	21,626	31.7	
1895	24,511	35.9	23,081	33.8	
1896	27,159	39.8	23,506	34.7	
1897	23,169	34.0	24,854	36.5	
1898	22,660	33.2	24,388	35.8	
1899	23,275	34.3	24,310	35.7	
1900	30,772	45.2	23,734	34.8	
Total ...	249,210	36.5	230,897	33.8	

In the light of these figures the opinion was expressed that the indigenous population was wholly stationary, and that "the large increase was entirely due to immigration and the rapid expansion of the industry, which affords employment to a large labour force wholly imported, and for the most part from Chota Nagpur."

14. On the majority of gardens, the coolies build their own huts, the garden supplying the necessary material, thatch, bamboos, etc., and paying the coolies for their labour. A few gardens employ *Gharamis* and have the lines built by contract, but most allow the coolies to hut themselves, which is cheaper in the off-season, when there is little work.

Lines on an elaborate barrack system are unknown, and there is no doubt that coolies prefer to make their own houses in their own way, though the accommodation may be inferior. Most gardens have a resident native doctor. European Medical Officers reside in the sub-districts, and are in charge of a number of gardens, but the European is not retained on account of the coolies, nor is attendance to the labour force regarded as his legitimate work, though he would be called in to attend to a serious case or in the event of an epidemic. Dispensaries are provided, but there are no regular hospitals. The coolie can get medicine if he requires it from the garden Doctor Babu who is expected to attend to cases, but he naturally does not receive the same care and attendance under European supervision as on gardens employing Act-labour in Assam or on Assam gardens generally.

Most gardens have wells, or bring water from the hills by a system of pipes or water channels, according to the situation. East of the Jaldacca the water-supply is a difficult matter, and the expense of sinking masonry wells in the waterless tract at the foot of the hills is considerable. Elsewhere Norton tubes and pumps are in use. Resort to streams is discouraged, on account of cholera, and coolies themselves excavate shallow wells near the river banks. A curious feature of the submontane streams is their disappearance below the surface and reappearance at some distance from the hills. No comparison, however, can be made as regards the expense incurred by some companies in Assam on lines, hospitals, water-supply, medicines, and medical attendance, though it is doubtful how far these advantages are appreciated by the average coolie, who would probably elect for the freer system if allowed a choice.

15. It is alleged that there is a considerable amount of enticement amongst sirdars of one another's coolies, and that the offer of bonuses or inducements by managers occasionally encourages this. Seduction of labour was more prevalent some years ago when new gardens were being opened out. The Labour Rules only refer to the repayment of advances. The estate receiving the coolies may elect to repay the money due from them to the estate which they have left. Arrangements, however, exist between neighbouring estates in sub-districts according to which there is an obligation to return the coolies. A copy of the Duars Labour Rules furnished by the courtesy of the Secretary of the Duars Planters' Association, will be found in Appendix No. 9. The bulk of the labour force is permanent, but there is always a considerable number of coolies continually on the move. It is not unusual for individuals to abscond, but it is the interest of the sirdar to watch his coolies, and prevent them from absconding. Coolies are paid monthly about the 15th of the succeeding month, and on the great majority of gardens through their sirdars. There is general understanding that if coolies abscond to other gardens the outstandings will be paid up, the estate paying and the sirdars becoming security, or the sirdar may pay up in a lump sum, otherwise the manager advances the money and recovers from the sirdar's pay or commission. On the other hand, sirdars look after their own absconders, and on occasion obtain the assistance of the garden chaukidar, who possibly enjoys extra authority from the fact that his position has some official recognition. In the absence of labour laws no right of inspection is reserved, nor is there any interference in the matter of wages, tasks, or the general management of estates. Ill usage, excessive tasks, or short payment of wages would inevitably ensure the departure of the labour force to another garden. Resort to the courts for the settlement of disputes is very rare. The magistracy neither would nor could force a discontented body of labourers to remain on or return to an estate. Undoubtedly, with free labour there is greater necessity for the exercise of tact and restraint on the part of employers.

16. The question of the inadequacy of the labour supply has been discussed. The Superintendent of one of the largest Companies considers that the labour force is about 30 per cent. under the requisite strength, but according to others this estimate is too low. The addition of about 45 per cent. to the average working force would, as a rule, give the number of labourers actually on the garden. It is not that the labour force is not available, but the difficulty consists in turning them out to work: "They cannot and will not be driven." It is clear, then, that, if the average at work varies from 50 to 60 per cent., a much larger resident force is required than on most Assam gardens. Though complaints are general as regards the inadequacy of the labour force and the difficulty of obtaining coolies in the recruiting districts within the last three or four years, it is necessary to remember the difference in this respect. The relations between employers and employed are considered by the district authorities to be most satisfactory.

17. Riots are most uncommon. The only recent disturbance of the kind occurred at a garden in the Alipur subdivision in September last. The manager reported a riot, and asked for Police assistance. The coolies, who were working overtime, threw away the leaf and broke the glass doors of the godown. The case, which was declared to be a true case of rioting, sections 143 and 147, Indian Penal Code, was amicably settled out of court, and does not appear to have attracted any particular attention. Though riots are rare, strikes occasionally occur. In a severe case of prolonged strike assistance is sometimes obtained from other gardens to carry on the work, a similar accommodation being given in similar circumstances. It is not, however, often necessary to have recourse to such measures, as some arrangement is usually arrived at by mutual concession. The arrival of discontented bodies of labourers at cutcherry to formulate general complaints is unheard of. Doubtless, it is necessary to secure that discipline on occasion should be summarily enforced in cases of impertinence, but any abuse of authority would entail its own punishment by leading to the desertion of an estate by the labourers, who would find no difficulty in obtaining employment elsewhere.

PART II.—MADRAS.

18. The following paragraphs deal with the districts of Madras. Excluding the Native State of Travancore, the principal tea districts of Southern India are the Nilgiris and the Malabar-Wynaad. Tea cultivation is also being tried on a small scale in the Anamalai Hills in Coimbatore. The number of tea gardens in the Nilgiris is 113 and the total acreage under tea 7,664 acres, of which 84.32 acres are in small patches of cultivation under 5 acres in extent. The Collector reports that the average strength of the labour force according to returns received from planters is from $\frac{3}{4}$ to one coolie per acre under tea. As regards the approximate strength of the total force, only 23 gardens, with an acreage of 1,936 acres, have furnished returns, showing a labour force of 1,196 persons. The total area at present under coffee is 25,981 acres, so that the proportion of coffee to tea is 3.4. Seventy-two coffee estates out of 476 return a labour force of 4,330 coolies on an acreage of 5,776 acres. The Collector estimates the present number of coolies in the district at from 15,000 to 20,000 on tea and coffee estates, and observes that, as the price of coffee has fallen by about 50 per cent. since 1895, considerable reduction of the labour force on estates has been effected from motives of economy. It may be observed that tea and coffee are grown on the same estates. For instance, on one large estate visited the acreage under coffee was 3,500 acres and the acreage under tea 520 acres. The Collector of Malabar reports that the number of tea gardens in the Malabar-Wynaad is 25, and the acreage under tea 4,085 acres. The approximate strength of the labour force on these estates is given at 334 permanent and 2,056 temporary employees. It is stated, however, that the figures are unreliable, as at least one coolie per acre is the usual calculation. The number of coolies annually imported for the purpose of tea cultivation is estimated at about 5,000. Information as regards the number of coolies imported into the Nilgiris to tea estates is not available. Coolies required for estates in Coonoor taluk and for portions of Ootacamund taluk are chiefly drawn from the Coimbatore district, which lies at the foot of the hills, to a certain extent from Mysore, and to a small extent from the Salem and North Arcot districts. The rest of Ootacamund taluk and Gudalur obtain their labour supply chiefly from Mysore. The Collector of Malabar reports that most of the tea labour in his district is foreign, and comes from Mysore. A small proportion only comes from the East Coast.

19. Statistics showing the proportion of local labour and of labour imported from British India and from Mysore were obtained as regards Madras districts in 1896, and are given below :—

—			Local.	Imported from British India.	Imported from Mysore.
Wynaad	...	...	20	54	26
Nilgiris	...	...	17.5	44.5	38
Shevaroy (Salem)	...	...	50	50	} There is no tea in these three districts.
Lower Palneys (Madura)	...	...	86	14	
Tinnevelly	...	...	80	20	

These figures refer to coffee and cinchona as well as to tea, which in Southern India as yet is of small importance as compared with coffee, except in the State of Travancore, where tea cultivation to a great extent has superseded coffee.

In 1895-96 the acreage under tea in Madras districts was only 6,797 acres and in Travancore 9,422 acres. The acreage in Madras has, however, increased to 12,241 acres and in Travancore to 24,879½ acres. In the Nilgiris the local labourers are usually Badagas and in the Wynaad Kurumbars and Cherumars. Kurumbars and Irulers living on the slopes also work on the Nilgiri estates. The manager of the Kodanaad estates in the Nilgiris estimated his local labour at 30 per cent. Many of the plucking coolies were Badaga children, and the men were employed under contract on pruning, weeding, and forking. The Collector estimates the local labour in the Nilgiris generally at 15 per cent. Except in Salem, Madura, and Tinnevely, where the circumstances are exceptional, labour for estates in Southern India as a rule is imported from a distance. In 1865 the Collector of the Nilgiris reported that 7/10 of the coolies were imported from Mysore, and in 1877 30,000 Mysore coolies were employed in the Malabar-Wynaad. Owing, however, to the scarcity of Mysore labour importations from that province have declined, and it has been found necessary to recruit for estates in all parts of Southern India from the various Madras districts as well as from Mysore, which originally was the chief source of supply.

20. The following account of the system on which coolies are recruited and imported is extracted from the report of the South of India

System of recruitment.

Planters' Enquiry Committee. It may, however, be observed that the maistry does not correspond to the garden sirdar of Assam. In recruiting imported labour, maistries are almost invariably employed as agents between the planters and the coolies. The maistry enters into a contract with the planter, and the contract is generally reduced to writing. Such contracts are signed by the maistry, rarely by the planter, and they are seldom, if ever, registered. In the case of old and trusted maistries, informal verbal agreements sometimes take the place of written contracts, and in some places, for instance, parts of Travancore, a verbal agreement is supplemented by a promissory note executed by the maistry. Receiving a lump sum in advance, the maistry undertakes to supply a certain number of coolies for plantation work for a certain time. These engagements are usually made in March or April of each year, the time fixed for the commencement of work on the plantations being two or three months later.

The period of the contract is usually nine months, sometimes less, and it never exceeds a year, except in very rare cases in the Nilgiris, where the maximum is said to be two years. The maistry then proceeds to the village or villages, where he collects labour, and generally returns to his employer's estate with his gang, though some maistries remain in their villages and send their gang to the plantations in charge of their representatives as headmen. The average strength of a maistry's gang varies between 20 and 40 adult males, females, and children; the average maximum is 100, but in some cases a maistry furnishes as many as 200 or 250 coolies. When, as is usually the case, a maistry accompanies his coolies to the estate, his duties are on the one hand to make the necessary arrangements for their journey, to look after their general welfare on the estate, and to bring any complaints they have to make to the notice of the planter, and, on the other, to exact the due performance of work from them for the period of his contract. His remuneration and the form it takes vary in different districts. In some, he receives only commission, usually ten per cent, on the wages earned by his coolies, in others, both wages and commission, and elsewhere, only wages. Whenever commission is paid it is always paid in excess by the planter, and is not deducted from the wages due to the coolies.

The maistry generally belongs to the village or locality in which his labour is recruited, and as a rule the coolies are within a few days' journey by road from their homes, the distance rarely exceeding 100 to 150 miles. The maistry has no security except his contract, which is now more frequently in writing than was formerly the case, but in recruiting from his own neighbourhood he has the advantage of local knowledge and influence. The new Labour Act, however, was largely required for the protection of the maistry against absconding coolies, though it is perhaps doubtful whether the agitation for a labour law would have arisen but for the necessity of protecting the planting industry in Native States, as extradition could not be obtained under Act XIII of 1859. The maistry generally resides on the estate, often in the lines with his coolies, so that he is in constant touch with them, and it is his interest to see that they do not abscond. As a rule, he is a man of some standing and influence, and with property in his village. On some estates the same maistries have worked for 20 years, and a head maistry may earn as much as 400 or 500 rupees in the year from commission. A leading planter in the Nilgiris is of opinion that there is less loss from fraudulent maistries

than when the Commission sat in 1896, and that this is true of all Madras districts as well as of the Province of Mysore. The figures then obtained show that losses on advances were most serious in Native States, owing to the facilities for evading arrest in the absence of extradition. Figures were not given for the Nilgiris, but it is stated that the loss was and is insignificant. The statistics collected in 1896 give the amount considered to be irrecoverable out of advances outstanding at Rs. 11,750 in the Malabar-Wynaad, and at Rs. 3,35,750 in Mysore, where the enormous excess was due to the fact that the North Mysore planters could not make use of Act XIII of 1859 against defaulting maistries and coolies from South Canara, who absconded to their homes in British territory, and were aware of the state of law which afforded them immunity from arrest. As far as possible, maistries are employed who are well known to the employer and have been long resident on the estate.

21. A brief description of the system of advances has been given in the Commission Report of 1896, which is as follows:—

System of advances.

A lump sum is advanced by the planter to a maistry, generally in the month of March or April, when imported coolies return to their homes, in consideration of which the latter engages (generally in writing) to bring a certain number of coolies in the following June or July to work on the estate till the following March or April. The amount of the advance varies according to the number of coolies whom the maistry contracts to bring, to the distance of the recruiting ground, and the class, sex, and age of the coolies. The maistry proceeds to the recruiting ground and makes advances to coolies, entering into contracts with them (sometimes in writing, but more often not) and he brings the coolies whom he has collected to the plantation. When the coolie arrives at the plantation, the planter generally gives him a blanket, and until wages are due to him "subsistence allowance." These amounts are recovered from his wages. The planter recovers his advance from the maistry by deductions from his pay, from the commission on the coolies' pay which he receives, and, in not a few cases, when the coolie admits having received an advance, from the coolie's wages, though the theory is that the wages due are paid to the coolie in full, and the maistry is left to recover from the coolie the advances made by him out of which he refunds the advance made to him by the planter. The coolie is generally held to be at liberty to leave his work when he has repaid his advance; but the maistry is generally bound by his contract to keep up his gang to the number specified for the whole working season.

22. In the Nilgiris, advances to maistries usually run from Rs. 5 to Rs. 10 for the supply of coolies per head, but elsewhere they may range up to Rs. 20, or considerably higher in exceptional circumstances. When the maistry comes to the estate with his gang, a portion of the advance is recovered from his pay or commission, month by month, and the balance on completion of the contract. Practically, it is a suspense account, the maistry receiving the advance again for the following year. Recruitment is not subject to any restrictions in the recruiting districts nor is the treatment of coolies *en route* to the estates regulated by any special provisions of law. Coolies nearly always come by road to the Nilgiris. If the railway is used, the distance is so short that the cost is inconsiderable. The fare one way may be allowed if the coolie has performed his contract, but the matter of transport is usually left to the maistry, no special arrangements being made. Road expenses generally form part of the advances given and are afterwards recovered from the wages earned. In the Nilgiris, excluding bad debts to maistries, the cost of recruitment is said to be practically nil.

23. With local labour, the planter occasionally deals with the coolie direct, as in the Shevaroy's, where it is the practice to advance small sums to coolies under Act XIII of 1859, but with imported labour

Contracts.

contracts under Act XIII are almost invariably entered into with the maistry, and not, as in Assam, with the individual labourer. If a coolie absconds and pay is due to him, the amount is credited to the maistry, and deducted from the advance against him, and as the maistry contracts for the season to keep his gang up to a certain strength, he may, and often does, obtain another coolie to fill the place of the absentee. If a maistry takes on coolies belonging to another maistry, he is expected to pay up the advances due from the coolies to their maistry, the matter, as a rule, being arranged among themselves. If the contract is made direct with the coolie, it may be in writing or it may be verbal. Contracts between maistries and coolies are generally in writing, especially if a considerable amount is involved. They are signed by the coolie, but not usually registered. The term varies from a few weeks in the case of local labourers, and seldom exceeds a year, which is the maximum period under the new Labour Act.

24. As a rule, coolies get their supplies from the nearest bazar. They get grain money at intervals, once a week or at the beginning or middle of the month, which is recovered from their wages.

Wages and tasks.

They are paid individually, the maistry being present with his gang. Subsistence

allowance is given in cases of illness, and is usually deducted from the wages, but in cases of accident the employer's responsibility is recognised.

The rate of wages in the three Madras districts in which tea is grown, *viz.*, the Nilgiris, Malabar-Wynaad, and Coimbatore, is given in the Commission Report as follows:—

	Men.	Women.	Children.
Wynaad ...	... 4 annas	2 annas 8 pies to 3 annas.	1 anna 4 pies to 2 annas.
Nilgiris ...	... 3 annas 8 pies, 4 annas, 4 annas 2 pies, 4 annas 3 pies, to 5 annas.	2½ annas, 2 annas 8 pies, 2 annas 9 pies, to 3 annas. 2½ annas	1 to 2 annas.
Coimbatore (Anamalais)	4 annas		1½ to 2 annas.

It is stated that 5 annas is only paid in the Nilgiris to men who do 25 per cent. more work than men earning 4 annas. The general rate is reckoned at 4 annas for a man, 2½ annas, 2 annas 8 pies to 3 annas for a woman, and from 1 to 2 annas for children. In the Nilgiris the monthly rates at present are given at Rs. 6 and Rs. 6-8 for men and Rs. 4 and Rs. 4-8 for women. The Collector of Malabar returns the daily wage of imported labour at 4 annas for men and 2½ annas for women. The rates have remained much the same since 1896, except in new districts and remote and unhealthy tracts, where men receive as much as 5 annas a day. Factory hands receive Rs. 8 and upwards and are besides paid for overtime. Outdoor labour is paid at the same rate irrespective of length of service. Increments can be earned in plucking tea for two or three months in the higher hills and for four or five months in the Wynaad. At high elevations in the Nilgiris the system of cultivation is peculiar. There is no severe labour in the form of hoeing which would be ruinous to the soil on steep hillsides. Plucking continues more or less throughout the year. Ten pounds represented the average amount plucked throughout the season on an estate at 6,000 feet. In May, June, and July, the task was from 12 to 15 pounds, 2 to 3 pice per pound being paid for *ticca*. The bushes were not pruned every year, but every two or three years on the average. At Kodanaad the leaf is chiefly China hybrid. Plucking is fine, the aim being quality. At this elevation, 6,000 to 7,000 feet, and in this climate Assam indigenous tea suffers from drought and does not flush well. In the Duchtlermy Valley, about 3,000 feet, the method of cultivation more approximates that of Assam, but usually in the Nilgiris it is not possible for an outdoor male labourer to earn extra pay, as the daily wage is considered a sufficient inducement. In the Southern India planting districts generally it is stated that an adult male coolie can save on the average in the working season from Rs. 24 to Rs. 33, and an adult coolie woman from Rs. 12 to Rs. 18, with regular work. It is the practice with the coolies to bank their earnings with the estate, and to draw only sufficient for expenses, so as to be able to proceed to their homes with a lump sum at the close of the season.

25. The staple food of Canarese coolies from Mysore is *ragi*, which is a cheaper and more sustaining grain than rice. The Superintendent of one of the largest tea estates in the Nilgiris estimates that a Mysore coolie would eat 36 measures of *ragi* at a cost of Re. 1-12 per mensem, and that it would cost him about Rs. 2-8 in food alone. Food would cost a Tamil, who is a rice-eater, about Rs. 3. This is the minimum. Another Superintendent estimated the monthly cost of living for a coolie man at Rs. 4, which is the average amount drawn in expense money, the balance of pay being saved for the annual home journey. A woman draws about Rs. 2, but she usually has relations who contribute to her support. The object of the coolie is to save as much as he can in the nine or ten months' season. The average price of rice and *ragi* in the Nilgiris for 1903, according to the Collector, is given below:—

	Ootacamund.	Coonoor.	Gudalur.	District average.
	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.
Rice per rupee	17½	19½	20½	19½
Ragi per rupee	32½	37	42½	37½

At Gudalur, in the Nilgiri-Wynaad, which is an important estate centre, the average price of rice was therefore about Rs. 4 a maund.

26. As regard the lines on which the labour force is organised and controlled on estates, it may be stated that the maistry nearly always remains on the estate as a field supervisor throughout the season, and receives his commission, generally 10 per cent. on the coolies' earnings, which is not, however, deducted from their

System on which labour is controlled and organised on estates.

wages but paid to him by the estate. To induce the maistry to turn his coolies out to work, some estates give him a day's name or a daily wage in addition to his commission if the number of the gang at work does not fall below a certain minimum, or he may receive a rate per head on the number of coolies who work a certain number of days in the month. It is the practice to muster the coolies in the morning from the check roll to see that they are present. They are then distributed, and an entry made in a distribution book. A maistry goes out with each gang to the particular work on which they may be employed. As a rule, a field superintendent, Native or Eurasian, is employed to go round and visit the different gangs at work. His duty is to check the maistry, who subsequently brings up a list of the coolies who have not done the task which is set when the coolies go out in the morning. As elsewhere, the acreage, number of bushes, etc., is known and the amount of labour required to do the work. If the work is badly done, the maistry is held responsible and loses his pay or commission. If the coolie is given half a day's name it indirectly affects the maistry. It is, therefore, his interest to see that the coolie performs his task. Orders are generally issued to the native writer or overseer, who passes them on to the maistry. Sometimes orders are given direct to the maistry, but usually the native overseer receives them and sees to their performance. A maistry may receive 4 annas a day in addition to commission whenever his gang at work amounts to 25 coolies, or 8 annas on each coolie who works a full month excluding Sundays or bazar days. On the other hand, deliberate neglect can always be punished by fine of pay or commission.

27. As regards the period for which coolies generally remain in garden employ, it is true that tea requires more labour and a more constant supply than coffee. On some tea estates, accordingly, imported labourers remain two, three, and four years without returning to their homes, whereas on coffee plantations nearly all coolies leave when the crop is harvested for about a couple of months. But, generally speaking, the annual migration is a most important feature of the labour system. The Labour Commission state in their report that "on tea estates in the Nilgiris and Travancore the proportion of coolies who work all the year round is 50 to 75 per cent., but in such cases, too, the coolies are allowed to return to their homes for a holiday," whereas, on the contrary, "on coffee estates not more than 5 to 10 per cent. work throughout the year, and those who do so are employed on special work." It was found on some of the largest tea estates in the Nilgiris that the bulk of the labour force left about the 1st of March, the coolies returning again in June. One tea estate in the Nilgiri-Wynaad had paid off 150 out of 500 coolies in the beginning of February, the majority of whom would return in two or three months' time with their maistries, from Coimbatore, and it was estimated out of the 500, 80 or 100 only would remain on during the hot weather months of their own accord, under arrangement with their maistries, and suffice, with the aid of local labour, to carry on estate work. The Superintendent of another tea estate of 1,000 acres estimated that at least two-thirds of his labour force returned to their homes every year, the maistries arranging for the coolies required to remain on throughout the year, and he considered the annual holiday a more important factor in encouraging recruitment than the system of advances. The proximity of the recruiting districts to the estates of course renders this migration possible, and the custom, which doubtless originated in the fact that the coffee industry does not require a continuous supply of labour throughout the year, has persisted. It may be confidently asserted that imported coolies rarely settle in the planting districts. The Labour Commission, which recorded a mass of evidence from all districts in Southern India, found that "the number of labourers who settle in the vicinity of plantations was extremely small, and that those who do settle follow their own pursuits, and are no longer available as ordinary estate coolies." As plantation coolies are usually imported from the plains to the hills, the conditions for settlement are unfavourable, and they naturally prefer to return to their own homes when they are able to do so.

28. The Commission Report further stated that "the testimony as to the impossibility of persuading labourers to form colonies in the vicinity of plantations in Southern India was practically unanimous, and that there did not appear to be any prospect of a permanent labour supply being established in the planting districts themselves." The fact seems to be, as regards tea at any rate, that, as the estates are in the hills often at a considerable elevation, land suitable for cultivation by natives of the plains is not available.

29. Gardens in the Nilgiris are naturally healthy from their situation, but coolies require to be acclimatized to the cold, and cases of pneumonia occur. The Oucherlony Valley and the

lower country round Gudalur is less healthy, and parts of the Southern Wynaad, which are subject to a heavy rainfall, are said to be malarious. No statistics are available as regards the mortality on tea estates. Isolated cases of plague have occurred on some estates, but the occurrence of epidemic diseases is generally unknown. No uniformity of practice is observed, as regards reporting mortality. Some estates do not report deaths from natural causes. Others report all deaths to the village headman or other official, who records them in a register of vital statistics.

30. In the Nilgiris good lines of brick or stone, with thatched, tiled, or iron roofs, are provided by the estate. In the lower country the houses are built of bamboo, and are of a less permanent character. It is said the coolie prefers this style to the *pucca* barrack system, and it no doubt has advantages in the event of an epidemic, such as plague. In case of sickness the coolie can obtain ordinary medicines from the estate dispensary. Regular hospitals are not maintained on estates. As is well known, the coolie dislikes removal to hospital, and when he is a free agent would not submit to it. Some estates have their own well-paid apothecaries, as for instance, the Ouchterlony tea and coffee estates. Serious cases can be treated in the Government dispensaries or hospitals, of which the well-found hospital at Gudalur is an excellent specimen, and these are generally within a reasonable distance of the estates. "In Malabar, Wynaad, . . . planters subscribe to medical funds, out of which qualified European Doctors, Hospital Assistants, and dispensaries are maintained . . . But coolies prefer, as a rule, to return to their homes when they are seriously ill, and in such cases they are conveyed thither at the expense of the estate."

In the hills the water-supply is from springs or streams conducted by pipes and channels, when necessary, care being taken to avoid contamination. The Nilgiri district in its physical aspects is not unlike the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, and it is obvious that tea planting under such conditions can have little or no resemblance to the same industry carried on in the plains of Assam. To appreciate the difference it would be necessary to imagine estates in the Khasi Hills with a labour supply drawn from the plains of Sylhet, Kamrup, and Goalpara, with other plantations in the lower hills towards the Brahmaputra, a tract which gives some idea of the Wynaad. A large proportion of the tea and coffee estates, except in Travancore, are private concerns on a much smaller scale than gardens owned by large Companies in Assam. Seduction of labour between one estate and another is rare. Absconding cannot be said to be prevalent, and such cases as are instituted are brought chiefly by maistries against coolies. It is, however, to the interest of the maistry to retain his labour, and as he frequently lives with them in the lines, he has every opportunity of watching and controlling them. Coolies abscond if a grasping maistry endeavours to recover advances from their pay too rapidly. A good maistry, however, treats his coolies with consideration and relations are generally satisfactory when the maistry, as is usually the case, belongs to the village or vicinity from which his labour is recruited.

31. Cases of riot and assault are not altogether unknown, though they appear to be of infrequent occurrence. For instance, in 1901-1902 the Magistrate of the Nilgiris referred two cases in which planters had been assaulted by their coolies to the High Court for enhancement of sentences. In the more serious case, a strike occurred among the coolies of an estate in the Ouchterlony Valley, owing to the Superintendent having fined one of them for short work. All the coolies, to the number of 100, assembled at the Superintendent's house, and on his attempting to mount his horse he was struck on the side with an axe and assaulted with sticks and stones. The High Court enhanced the sentence on the chief accused from 2 to 18 months, and held that the offence of rioting armed with dangerous weapons had been committed. In the other case, the Superintendent of a neighbouring estate, on his way back from making weekly payments, was overtaken by 40 or 50 coolies led by a maistry, threatened with sticks, and kept prisoner until rescued by the bazar people. In this case the High Court enhanced the sentences to three months. The Magistrate who made the references commented on the gravity of cases of the kind occurring at short intervals in a planting district within a distance of a few miles.

32. Madras Act I of 1903, an Act to regulate the conditions of labour in the planting districts in the Presidency of Madras, came into force on the 12th May 1903, but its operation has not yet been extended to any particular district. The objections raised against the introduction of the new Act are, (1) the alleged difficulty of getting contracts executed in the presence of a Magistrate; (2) that the Act will not work well in dealing with local labour; (3) that the requirements under the rules contemplated

Under section 42 may be costly and inconvenient. It is particularly the difficulties about local labour contracts, and the apprehension regarding possible provisions with reference to medical inspection and coolies' accommodation that appear to have carried most weight with those who reject the Act. No provisions, therefore, exist at present as regards the inspection of estates, nor is their management in any way controlled by officers of Government. There is no interference to fix the rate of wages or hours of work or task. The new Act provides that every contract between a planter and a maistry, and every labour contract, shall be in writing, and in such form as rules made under the Act may direct. The maximum period is one year. Act XIII of 1859 is withdrawn, and remains in abeyance when Act I is introduced into any particular area, and for so long as Act I remains in force in that area. The new Act contains provision for the determination of labour contracts upon notice given by either party, and a labourer may determine his labour contract at any time without notice, on showing to the satisfaction of a Magistrate that he has reasonable grounds for determining it, and on repaying any sum found by the Magistrate to be due by him to his employer, together with a further sum of 3 annas for every working day of the unexpired period of his contract, or period of three months, whichever may be less. Provisions are made for the maintenance of registers of labourers and dependants, for the issue of diet or subsistence allowance, lodging, and medical care in the case of labourers incapacitated by illness or accident, for house accommodation, water-supply, sanitary arrangements, and medical attendance in the case of labourers generally, for inspection by the District Magistrate, Subdivisional Magistrate, or District Surgeon, for the remedy of sanitary defects within a certain period, and in default for the annulment of labour contracts. The right of the labourer to proceed to lay a complaint is reserved, and punishment in case of frivolous and vexatious complaints is provided for. If wages are wrongfully withheld, the Magistrate may award the amount due and compensation not exceeding that amount, and may declare the contract cancelled. The labour contract may also be cancelled for ill-usage on the part of the employer or on his conviction of certain offences and compensation may be awarded up to Rs. 30. The punishment of defaulting maistries with imprisonment to three months, with fine up to Rs. 500 or both, is provided for under section 24, and compensation may be awarded to the employer out of the fine. Absence from work without reasonable cause, neglect or refusal to work, are punishable on conviction with imprisonment up to seven days and a daily fine of 4 annas. The right of private arrest is not recognised, but desertion is punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one month, and with fine up to Rs. 50. Wrongful arrest is punishable by fine, and compensation may be awarded, and apparently the offence is not compoundable under the Act. The endorsement of periods of absence from work and of imprisonment on conviction for absence or desertion is provided for by section 52. The term of imprisonment may be cancelled if the labourer agrees to work. Specific performance is provided for on the expiry of any sentence of imprisonment, conviction and imprisonment not having the effect of releasing the maistry or labourer from the terms of his contract or labour contract, a material advantage in favour of the employer in comparison with Act XIII of 1859. An important provision, however, as regards finality of contracts is that no such direction shall be given in the case of a labourer, if more than twelve months have elapsed from the date on which the original labour contract would have determined.

Penalties are also provided for the enticement or employment of labourers under contract, which is punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one month, or with fine, which may amount to Rs. 200, or with both.

Such are in brief the main provisions of the Madras Act, which, as a comparison with the Assam Labour and Emigration Act will show, have their corresponding sections in the latter.

PART III.—CEYLON.

33. The expansion of the tea industry in Ceylon is as phenomenal as it is recent. In 1873, the acreage under tea was only 280 acres, and the quantity exported 23 lbs. In 1883, the acreage had increased to 32,000 acres and in 1893 to 273,000 acres. In 1903, the approximate area under tea cultivation has been estimated at 386,000 acres, including about 3,000 acres belonging to small native proprietors. Tea cultivation by Sinhalese was on the increase until the general check due to over-production occurred. In 1903, the acreage under tea on 1,541 plantations was 382,917 acres, and the total area under cultivation, including cacao, cardamoms, coffee, cinchona, rubber, and other minor products, was 466,505 acres. It is stated in the Review of Administration, 1896—1903, that the cultivation of tea gives employment to 350,000 Tamil coolies, and the

approximate strength of the labour force on plantations generally has been estimated at 400,000 persons. In the Census of 1901, the number of Tamil workers on tea estates was 286,713 (162,322 males and 124,391 females), while dependants numbered 52,815. Other labourers were returned at 68,816 "earners." The population enumerated on estates generally was 441,601, an estate under the Census Ordinance being defined as an area of 20 acres or more under cultivation upon which there are ten or more resident coolies or labourers. The great majority of these estates are planted with tea, and are under European management. Apparently, some difficulty is experienced in obtaining absolutely accurate returns, as the various products are cultivated conjointly on some estates, so that allowance has to be made for mixed returns. On the 1st March 1901, the estate population formed 12 per cent. of the total population of the island, which, excluding shipping, South African prisoners-of-war, and the military, amounted to 3,565,954 souls. More than half the estate population is contained in the Central Province, the Kandi district returning 155,144 persons, Nuara Eliya 103,564, and Matale 26,130. Considerable economy of labour has resulted with improved communications by road and rail, and with the introduction of shoots and machinery generally on hill estates, but it is considered that an allowance of three-quarters to one coolie per acre under tea is not excessive.

34. According to the Census figures of 1891 and 1901, the proportion of Tamils and

Extent to which local labour is available. Sinhalese in the estate population is as follows :

	1891.		1901.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1	2	3	4	5
Sinhalese	8.46	5.76	6.1	4.8
Tamils	88.35	91.51	91.37	93.08

The Tamils, who form the vast majority of the estate population, are mostly immigrants from the Southern Madras districts of Tinnevely, Madura, Trichinopoly, and Tanjore. Of Tamils employed on estates, 82 per cent. were immigrants from Southern India. Ceylon-born Tamils employed on estates in 1901 numbered 37,975 males and 36,649 females. At present, the existence of the tea industry therefore depends chiefly on imported labour.

Sinhalese are principally employed on estates in the low country to pluck tea leaf and render considerable assistance in the Kalutara and Galle districts and on some estates in the Kelani Valley, round Gampola, and in the Uva district. In the central districts, Dimbula, Dikoya, Maskeliya, Hatton, local labour of this kind is not available, as there are no villages. A recognised authority states that in the Galle district Sinhalese women have plucked leaf for as low a wage as 12½ cents a day cash, and that, in the Kalutara district alone, 500,000 rupees have been paid to Sinhalese labourers. In the number of Sinhalese among the estate population Colombo district comes first, with 4,879 persons, followed by Kandy (4,736), Galle (3,346), and Kalutara (2,033); but these figures presumably include only the resident population.

35. As regards the approximate number of coolies annually recruited or imported, there is an extraordinary fluctuation in the annual immigration figures showing the arrivals and departures of coolies. From 1879 to 1886, the usual excess of arrivals became a deficit, owing to the ruin of the coffee industry, but from 1887 onwards the excess in arrivals was renewed on account of the expansion of tea cultivation. In 1899 a deficit occurred, which was attributed to good harvests in Southern India, and the closure of the northern immigration

route on account of plague. In 1900 there was a large excess again of 95,000 arrivals. The figures for the five years ending 1902 are given below :—

Year.	Arrivals.	Departures.	Excess.	Deficit
1	2	3	4	5
1898	135,864	105,706	+ 31,158	...
1899	68,303	81,629	...	-13,236
1900	207,994	112,936	+ 95,058	...
1901	120,603	118,343	+ 2,260	...
1902	87,763	63,917	+ 23,846	...

These figures apparently include miscellaneous as well as estate coolies, as the total number of immigrant estate coolies who arrived in Ceylon during the seven years 1896—1902 was 549,387, or a yearly average of 78,484, while the number of estate coolies who left Ceylon during the same period was 685,025. The total arrivals for 12 months to December 1903 was 63,446. Since the establishment of the Raguma depôt in September 1897, the heaviest year was 1900, when a monthly average of 11,000 estate coolies passed through the camps.

36. The method of recruitment is through *Kanganies*, who correspond to the maistries of Madras. The term is also in use in Southern India. The great majority of the labourers are Tamils recruited from the nearest districts of Madras, and the head *kanganies* themselves are Tamils. The practice is for Superintendents of estates to advance a lump sum to the head *kangany* or *kanganies* generally in February or March, the necessity of sending to the recruiting districts not later than March being usually recognised. The amount advanced varies greatly. A good *kangany* is sent to the coast with money up to Rs. 2,000, the only security being a promissory note, and his force on the estate at the time. The head *kangany*, however, is usually a man who can be trusted, and who has been long resident on the estate. As a rule, the head *kangany* does not do the actual recruiting himself, but he makes arrangements with the under *kanganies*, who proceed to the villages in Southern India or "the coast" as it is termed, with sums of money advanced to them by him, or he may send coolies whom he can trust from among his gang. The recruiters leave about March and return between April and July. The arrangements between the head *kangany*, who is directly responsible to the estate, and the under *kanganies*, who are his middlemen, are not controlled by the Superintendent, but the head *kangany* takes care not to advance much unless he has good personal security or the security of relatives left behind. Occasionally, a head *kangany* may ask to have promissory notes, signed by under *kanganies* in the presence of the Superintendent, but as a rule the latter does not interfere. No arrangement is made, as in Madras, for the supply of labour for a certain time; a month's notice on either side being sufficient to terminate the contract. There is no security unless a legal document is drawn up, and this is very rarely done. Punishment for fraudulent disposal of advances by *kanganies* is provided for by Section 22 of the Ordinance No. 11 of 1865, but it is no doubt often difficult in such cases to establish fraud. Contracts are possible by law, but are seldom made use of. The head *kangany* may proceed to "the coast" on occasion, and he frequently has friends or relatives to watch his interests on the spot. He does not accompany the coolies through the depôts. A sub-*kangany* or other person deputed by him may proceed with the coolies to the depôt and remain with them until they arrive on the estate, or the coolies may come unaccompanied. The actual recruiting in the villages is therefore usually done by the under *kanganies*, though the head *kangany*, if he happens to be in "the coast," watches operations. The rate of advance in "the coast" may vary from Rs. 10 to Rs. 30 per coolie, and the amount in Southern India is largely governed by competition. It is said that losses are seldom sustained in advances for recruitment, and that they are not serious except in isolated cases. Many estates lose nothing. If a loss is sustained, the estate may bear part or the whole, though of course the greatest care has to be exercised in writing off advances in order to discount fraud and avoid establishing a precedent. For instance, strict enquiry is necessary in case the *kangany* may have placed the coolie on another estate. The writing off of advances generally used to be very rare, but of recent years it has not been so uncommon. The opening of large tracts of land some years ago created a sudden demand for trained labour which could not be obtained from India. This led to competition for labour already in the island, and the offer of exceptional advances, which

subsequently in some instances necessitated the writing off of exceptionally large amounts. But this is distinct from losses on advances made for legitimate recruitment.

37. Until 1899 coolies could proceed to the Ceylon plantations from Southern India by 3 routes, (1) by Paumben Mannar and the north road, (2) by Tuticorin and Colombo, (3) from the Madras ports of Ammapatam and Tondi to Colombo. In January 1899, however, owing to the prevalence of plague in India, it was decided to make Colombo the only port of entrance, and to close the ports of the Northern Province. In the previous year (1898), about one-fifth of the immigrants used the Mannar route, by which they were conveyed at a charge of one rupee each from Paumben to Mannar, whence they travelled by road to Matale, a distance of 131 miles. Here they took the train or proceeded by road to the estates if they could not afford to pay the railway fare. At present coolies usually go to Ceylon *via* Tuticorin and Colombo. Besides Tuticorin, the other coolie ports in Southern India are Ammapatam, Tondi, and Paumben, to all of which recruiters and coolies find their way without assistance from their villages. At these ports the Ceylon Government has agents who see the coolies safely on board after medical examination, the Superintendent of Immigration at Tuticorin being in general charge. The British India Steam Navigation Company has a bi-weekly service between Ammapatam, Tondi, and Paumben to Colombo. From Tuticorin coolies are conveyed to Colombo by the daily mail steamers of the same Company. In October 1898, the Ceylon Government established an emigration depôt, known as the Tataparai Camp, at Tataparai, a station on the South Indian Railway, about 9 miles from Tuticorin. By this arrangement, coolies do not enter the town of Tuticorin at all.

38. Emigration arrangements at Tondi are in charge of a Medical Officer of the Madras Government, who inspects and issues certificates to emigrants proceeding to Ceylon. Emigration at Ammapatam is similarly in charge of an officer of the Ceylon Medical Department, and both ports are periodically inspected by the Superintendent of Immigration at Tuticorin. In 1902, 24,067 estate coolies proceeded *via* Tuticorin, 2,691 *via* Tondi, 6,759 by Ammapatam, and 237 from Paumben. The last named place, it is expected, will become the principal route on the opening of the railway to the north end of the island. Coolies who arrive at Tataparai by the morning train are supplied with food, medically inspected, and despatched by train to Tuticorin in time to catch the evening steamer for Colombo. Under the quarantine regulations, the Ceylon Medical Officers at the Indian ports are instructed not to issue passes to coolies from infected districts unless a period of five days in case of cholera, and of ten days in case of plague, has elapsed since the emigrant left his village. Coolies who are not passed are quarantined, but those who receive passes at Tataparai are fed at the depôt and then forwarded direct by special train to the place of embarkation. The steamer leaves about 5 p.m., and arrives at Colombo about 8 next morning. The coolies are disembarked at once at the foot of the breakwater, and pass into enclosed sheds. After a bath and a meal, about 11 a.m., they are conveyed by a special train in charge of guards to the Ragama camp, about 9 miles from Colombo on the main line up-country. At Ragama they are met, counted, and conducted to the depôt. Here they are again bathed, and if there is any cause for suspicion their belongings are burnt or disinfected. In order to protect estate coolies from infection from other passengers on board the steamer when cholera is prevalent at Tuticorin, one or two days in the week are allotted specially for the transport of traders and miscellaneous coolies, and on those voyages no estate coolies are carried. It will be seen that the treatment of coolies *en route* to the Ceylon estates from Southern India is regulated by the most elaborate precautions, principally on account of the danger of introducing plague. It is, however, claimed that the measures adopted have been so far effectual that, although there have been 19 separate outbreaks of cholera in 1900, 1901, and 1902, at the Ragama camp, with 16, 5, and 13 deaths in each year, infection has never been conveyed outside the limits of the camp, though the place is surrounded by native houses and in close proximity to a bazar and railway station, and, what is of infinitely greater importance, plague has hitherto been kept out of the island.

The most interesting arrangement, however, in connection with the transport of immigrant estate coolies from the Madras districts to Ceylon is that known as the "tin ticket system" which was devised by the Hon'ble Mr. Ellis, C.M.G., at present Auditor General of the Colony. Under this system "Government undertakes the responsibility of conveying the coolie free of charge from the Tataparai depôt to the railway station nearest to his estate, recovering his expenses subsequently from the Superintendent of

the estate." The system has been described as "practically an adaptation of the system of value payable post, the coolie being the package to be delivered and his address being contained on a small metal disc punched with a letter and number, denoting the district and estate for which he is bound. The Superintendent of the estate issues these tickets to individual coolies going on a visit to 'the coast,' or a number of them may be entrusted to a kangany going over to recruit labour."



W = District.
108 = Estate number in register of estates.
406 = Coolie's number.

These tickets can be obtained from the nearest cutcherry to the estate. "When on the return journey the coolies reach Tataparai, they present the tin tickets to the Dépôt Superintendent. The gang is at once entered in the dépôt register, and the coolies are fed and looked after in the same way as other coolies, but without having to pay a cent for their maintenance. Unless waiting for other members of their gang, they are despatched by steamer to Colombo on the afternoon of the day of their arrival at Tataparai. On arrival next morning at Colombo, they are met on board by the Immigration Agent, checked and landed, and, after being washed and fed, are forwarded by special train to Ragama. On arrival there a telegram is despatched to their estate, notifying their departure from the camp two days later. During these two days they are detained under observation, being again maintained at Government expense. On their departure they are provided with railway tickets, and are entrusted to the care of a special peon who is responsible for their safe delivery at the nearest station to their estate. Finally, their expenses for maintenance at Ragama and for railway tickets are entered upon a daily statement by the Camp Superintendent, and the statement is forwarded to the Colombo cutcherry. Here bills for the expenses of the coolies between Tataparai and their estate are made up and forwarded weekly to the outstation cutcherry to be recovered from the Superintendents of the estates."

The advantages claimed for the system are that it prevents congestion in the immigration depôts, and secures the safe arrival of the coolie on his estate with the minimum of delay and at the lowest possible cost. The average cost per head between Tataparai and the estate is from 5 to 6 rupees, of which about Rs. 3 represent the steamer fare. It is stated that "the system offers at least a partial solution of a question that has been brought prominently before planters of late years, namely, how to keep down "coast advances," as there is no longer any need to advance for the return journey more than the sum required to bring the coolie from his village to Tataparai. Besides, the value of the tin tickets cannot be squandered by the outgoing kangany or discounted with the chetties of Colombo or Tuicorin." Kanganies, it appears, were in the habit of appropriating part of the money advanced to them for recruitment, and were naturally disposed to resent the innovation. To discount opposition, and secure the general adoption of the system, it was found necessary to restrict the issue of railway tickets at cheap coolie rates to holders of tin tickets only. The coolie proceeding to India is required to pay cash for his ticket, but on producing the tin ticket supplied by his Superintendent he obtains the benefit of a railway ticket at a specially cheap rate.

Since June 1902, the charge to estates for railway fares of coolies travelling with the tin tickets at Government expense has been made at the cheap rates. Out of 33,788 estate coolies who passed through Ragama camp in 1902, 13,943 travelled with tin tickets, at a cost of Rs. 64,736, but the percentage of tin ticket coolies on the total number of estate coolies rose to 75 per cent. in July 1903. The working of the system appears to have been satisfactory, judging by its increasing popularity, and though it was anticipated that the form of the ticket would readily lend itself to forgery, experience has not justified the apprehension. The Colonial Administration Review records that "the tin ticket system, with the facilities which it affords for cheap and expeditious immigration from the coast, has come at an opportune moment. The Planters' Association has been lately obliged to consider ways and means of increasing the labour supply of the Colony, and there is no doubt that the new system, when properly understood, should be of the very greatest assistance in the recruiting of labour."

The system has been referred to at some length, as it is in itself an interesting experiment which has worked well in the circumstances, and in the hope that some adaptation of the principle may possibly be of service in promoting recruitment for Assam and in facilitating the return of coolies on visits to their homes, which is universally admitted to be one of the best means of popularizing service on estates in every district, and consequently of encouraging and furthering the recruitment of new labour.

39. No restrictions are imposed by the Government of Madras on the recruitment of coolies for estates in Ceylon. The cost of importing coolies from "the coast" is estimated at from Rs. 10 to Rs. 50 per head, including the steamer and railway fare. Excluding these charges, the balance is supposed to be given to the coolie or his relatives

Absence of restrictions on emigration from Madras. Cost of immigration.

for their maintenance while he is away, or to pay off debts or for expenses on the journey, etc. This was the original arrangement, though it is doubtful whether the coolie ever received more than a part. The amount paid in Southern India appears to be largely determined by competition. An instance was given in Madras by an advocate of the new Labour Act in which an estate had arranged for 300 labourers at advances of 10 rupees a head, when a Ceylon recruiter gave Rs. 20 a head and secured the whole batch. The amount advanced to head kangany, however, for recruiting in "the coast" is not rigidly fixed in this way. In Ceylon, the system of advances, which arose originally from the necessity of recruiting labour from "the coast," and the conditions under which labour is recruited in Southern India, has been applied to the engagement of coolies already in the island, with the result that some estates compete by offering extravagant "advances" to kangany in order to secure trained labour instead of recruiting from India. Nominally, the whole cost of importation, including steamer and railway fare, is recovered from the coolie, as a rule, through the kangany. Advances, generally, are sometimes recovered from the coolie's wages direct, but usually the whole amount is debited against the head kangany and deducted from his commission or contract pay. The coolies' services are very

Contracts. rarely secured by any form of agreement. An implied contract of service is created when the coolie's name is entered in the check roll and he has received an advance of rice or money. A month's notice is required to terminate the arrangement. A monthly contract by mere verbal agreement is also provided for. Under the Ordinance, there is an obligation on the labourer to work and on the employer to provide him with work for six days in the week. Consequently any short time is a matter for agreement. But, at an outside estimate, ordinary coolies do not work on the average more than five days a week, and the practice of working less than five days is commonly recognised as one cause of the indebtedness of coolies.

By section 8 of the amending Ordinance No. 13 of 1884, no contract of service entered into with a labourer for any period longer than one month is valid in law unless executed in accordance with the requirements of the Principal Labour Ordinance No. 11 of 1865 as to written contracts. This provides (section 7) that such contracts for terms of service exceeding one month but not exceeding three years are to be in writing, executed in triplicate, and signed and acknowledged by the parties before a Police Magistrate, Justice of the Peace, or person expressly authorised by Government, who shall fully explain the contract to the parties and certify on it that they fully understand the terms and are desirous to fulfil the same. Advantage is, however, very rarely taken of these provisions, and the coolie is universally regarded as a monthly servant.

40. Rice is supplied to coolies from the estate store as a rule, or an arrangement is made with a Chetty to store and issue rice. Occasionally, coolies buy direct from a *boutique* or *caddy*. On some estates there is a shop leased by a *caddy* keeper. On others a *caddy* is built for the use of the estate labour and made over rent free to the head kangany in the supposed interests of the coolies. Each district has its own rate, which fluctuates according to the price and cost of transport, but generally varies from 4 rupees to 4½ rupees per bushel of 64 lbs. Rice is chiefly imported from India, and pays an import duty. The usual allowance for men is ¼ of a bushel per week, or a bushel a month. Women and children receive ⅓ of a bushel one week and ¼ of a bushel the next. Small children, paid at the rate of 12 cents a day, get ⅓ a bushel a month. In calculating the amount of pay due, the employer is entitled to set off advances of rice, money, etc., given to the coolie, but "coast advances" given through a kangany are not recognised as an advance to the labourer. The general supposition is that there should not be much profit on rice.

The average daily wages of men, women, and children are 33 cents for men, 25 cents for women, and from 12 to 20 cents for children, according to their capacity. Some estates in the Uva district pay 35 cents and 29 cents to men and women.

Factory coolies get from 37 to 40 cents, or from 9 to 12 rupees a month. Outdoor labourers are paid at uniform rates. A coolie receives his full name or half name according to the proportion of task completed. An outdoor man cannot as a rule earn anything over and above his daily wages by working overtime in the field. As a rule no payments are made for overtime. Factory coolies may get extra wages or special allowances for overtime. Sometimes they receive 2 to 4 cents an hour. Information as regards wages was asked for in the form used in Assam and obtained for the Duars, but it has not been supplied. A task is based on 8 hours' work. On some estates women can earn from 45 to 60 cents a day in task and overtime plucking, but this is exceptional, during heavy flushes. Extra might be earned in this way for perhaps

three months according to the weather and condition of the property. No *ticca* is to be earned in any other way. April, May, and June are the best months. A good plucker might earn 25 cents over and above her pay during these three months, and possibly occasionally during the north-east monsoon if the weather was favourable. Some estates pay a certain rate per pound plucked, others pay for the day's task and so much a pound for excess. Some pay cash every day or at the end of the week or month. The method and time of payment varies. It depends on the system of cultivation adopted. Where quantity is more regarded than quality, as on some estates in the low-country, the practice is to pay a rate per pound over and above the task. As a rule, no hoeing is done. The disturbance of the soil was discouraged, but more forking is done now since the introduction of artificial manuring. All gardens are most carefully weeded on contract at 75 cents, Re. 1, up to Re. 1.25 an acre. The weeding is done by hand or with small scrapers called "*karandies*," the contracts being given to the head kangany, or on some estates parcelled out among the under-kanganies.

In any case, the contractor is bound to keep the estate clean month by month. On "clean" estates a good deal of profit may be made out of these contracts, which afford useful work for children, women, and weakly coolies. The kangany is allowed, subject to approval, to choose any coolies he likes out of his gang for the purpose. In the hills gardens are usually pruned in sections every two or three years. Some estates near Nuwara Eliya run for three or four years. In the low-country pruning may be done yearly or every eighteen months. Women are rarely employed on pruning. Gangs are employed according to their ability to pluck fields of tea in various stages. It is not so important, for instance, to employ highly-skilled pluckers on a field which is about to be pruned. It will be seen, therefore, that the method of cultivation differs very considerably from that of Assam and the Duars where the bushes are pruned every year, given a season of rest, and where the labour involved in hoeing an estate is often most arduous work.

The Chairman of the Planters' Association estimates the cost of living for coolies at Rs. 4 a month. The price of rice is the equivalent of Rs. 5 a maund and over. The indentured coolie in Assam, who receives rice from the estate at Rs. 3 a maund, and can in some districts, for instance, in Sylhet and Cachar, often buy it much cheaper from the villagers, is decidedly better off in this respect.

41. The lines on which the labour force is organised and controlled on the garden may be described as follows:—

Every estate employs a head kangany, and large estates may have two or three head kanganies. As has been seen, advances for recruiting are made over in a lump sum to the head kangany, and he arranges with under kanganies as middlemen or with selected coolies to do the actual recruiting. As a rule, the head kangany is not paid a monthly wage, but he receives "pence money," or commission, at the rate of 2 cents per head on each coolie who does a full day's work. If the sub-kangany controls labour in the field he gets a separate daily wage if he actually goes out with the coolies and looks after their work, but he receives "pence money" only on his own gang. His pence money varies from 3 to 4 cents per head, and this is given to induce him to turn out as much labour as he can. He receives no daily wage unless he accompanies the gang to work, and he may act as a supervisor or he may work as an ordinary labourer with the gang. In the latter case, he receives, of course, his daily wage as well as commission on the rest of the gang's work. The commission, or "head money," is paid by the estate and is not deducted from the coolies' earnings. Each coolie, on the basis of 25 days' work in the month, is worth 8 annas to the head kangany and Re. 1 to the under-kangany. The average of an under-kangany's gang is above 20 coolies, but some petty kanganies' gangs are much smaller and practically consist of the man and his relations. Three or four sub-kanganies are allowed usually per 100 coolies. A sub-kangany does not necessarily supervise his own coolies, on the contrary, he is nominated by the head kangany, and, if satisfactory, approved by the Superintendent. Coolies are generally paid every two months, which is the law, but many estates are beginning to pay monthly of their own accord. On all estates the coolies are mustered in the morning. They are then divided into gangs, which are sent out in charge of sub-kanganies. On some estates, the head kangany goes out to work with them. The sub-kanganies and their gangs are supervised either by a European Assistant, or by a conductor or outdoor native assistant, who may be a Jaffna Tamil, Sinhalese, Malay, Eurasian, or Burgher, and who may receive from Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 a month, according to his ability or the importance of his charge. A note is made of the distribution at muster by the conductor or assistant. On some estates a special kangany is appointed to look after weeding contracts. The head kangany

has the giving out of rice, the charge of estate tools, and in some cases the keeping of accounts on 600 or 700 coolies on whose work he draws commission. In the coffee days kanganies controlling 2,000 or 3,000 coolies were more common, and one or two of the kind may still survive. The commission system is supposed to ensure that the coolies turn out to work and perform a full day's task, and in the case of head kanganies their commission is the only form of remuneration. Some coolies, however, are so heavily indebted that there is little incentive to work, though work may be provided, while the hopelessness of the position is a premium on desertion. There seems little doubt that the majority of Tamil coolies are more or less in debt. An attempt has been made to obtain statistics of this indebtedness, and it has been estimated that the amount of outstanding advances is about six millions of rupees on 400,000 coolies, while the indebtedness of the coolie to kanganies and *caddy*-keepers may be double this amount. No interest is charged by estates on "coast advances." Indebtedness to petty shop-keepers and Chetties appears to be encouraged by the fact that the coolie is a monthly servant at liberty to leave an estate on a month's notice. He, or rather his kangany, is therefore in a position to offer his labour to the highest bidder. In Assam, where coolies arrive under indenture for a period of four years, this could not occur, as the coolie has no outside credit and the indebtedness is to the estate, which is undoubtedly the lesser evil of the two. The position of the kangany is therefore often one of considerable power and influence. He controls the labour on the garden. The coolies are his men, and do not belong to the estates, as in Assam. Hitherto, there has been no supervision over him when he leaves the garden and goes over to India to recruit labour. The indebtedness to the *caddy*-keepers is another matter. No doubt this evil is often exaggerated, and the remedy at first sight appears to be in the hands of Superintendents, as the shops are often on estate land and no other suitable site is available, but *caddies* and small bazars are a source of considerable profit to the proprietor of the particular estate on which they may happen to be situated. In the Duars the coolie is admittedly, to a considerable extent, master of the situation, and in Ceylon the kangany sometimes holds too strong a position. Some planters accordingly prefer the employment of a number of kanganies with smaller gangs to the concentration of authority in the hands of a single individual, with the control of several hundred coolies.

42. During the reign of coffee, coolies returned in larger numbers to the coast for an annual holiday at the close of the crop season, but since the supersession of coffee by tea the situation has necessarily undergone some alteration. Coolies do not, and cannot, return to their "coast" so frequently or so regularly as before, and the period in individual cases which elapses may extend to three or four years or longer. Tea cultivation affords more employment for children than coffee, and there is an ever-increasing number of coolies on estates who have been born and bred in Ceylon and who have never been to India. In case of sickness, a new coolie might return to the "coast" after a comparatively short experience. The system is practically one of free labour. Coolies are not under indenture, and they can leave an estate with a month's notice if they wish to do so. It would not be possible to detain a man for any length of time against his will. It is estimated that at least 10 per cent. of tea-garden coolies visit their homes at one time of the year or another. The figures of departures published by Government include others than estate coolies. These statistics, however, indicate that there is a constant flow backwards and forwards between the Southern Indian districts and Ceylon of immigrants of the coolie class, the majority of whom are estate labourers.

43. It is not the rule for Tamils to settle in the vicinity of tea gardens, except in some of the outlying districts. A large proportion of gardens are in the up-country districts. All available land, for example, round Dimbula and Hatton is taken up for special cultivation. There is no land available or suitable for rice or for such crops as are grown by natives of the plains, or as a rule for grazing. Generally speaking, in the hills the coolie has no other means of livelihood open to him except labour on the estates. When he has saved sufficient, he returns with his savings to his home. It is not therefore the practice to settle estate lands with coolies for the purpose of cultivation, though small patches are allotted for fruit or vegetable gardens in the vicinity of their houses.

44. As regards the general healthiness or unhealthiness of estates, it may be stated that gardens in the hills are as a rule healthy where the water-supply is good. Water from rivers is not always above suspicion, but where springs or hill streams exist the supply is excellent. The birth and death rates among the estate population for the

year 1902 and five years previous is extracted from the Colonial Administration Report of 1902, and given below:—

The total number of births reported for registration in 1902 from the estates in the Central, Uva, and Sabaragamuwa Provinces, and the Colombo and Kalutara districts of the Western Province, was 9,363 (of which 39 were Europeans, 25 Burghers, 277 Sinhalese, 8,898 Tamils, 95 Moors, 21 Malays, and 8 "others") and the total number of deaths was 11,258 (12 Europeans, 10 Burghers, 157 Sinhalese, 10,995 Tamils, 73 Moors, 5 Malays, and 6 "others").

The term "estate" means any land having 10 or more acres in cultivation, and situated in a district appointed under the Medical Wants Ordinance, No. 17 of 1880. The Ordinance has been brought into operation only in the districts containing tea, coffee, and other plantations, mainly under European management, *vis.*, in the districts named above.

The subjoined table P gives the birth and death-rates among the estate population. The Colombo district means here the estates in the Aviswella division:—

TABLE P.

Birth and death-rates among the estate population.

District.	Population at the Census of March 1st, 1901.	Proportion per 1,000 of the population.											
		Births.						Deaths.					
		1897.	1898.	1899.	1900.	1901.	1902.	1897.	1898.	1899.	1900.	1901.	1902.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Kandy	155,444	24.9	22.6	21.3	21.5	20.0	23.3	22.7	22.9	21.9	20.4	22.1	27.2
Matale	26,136	26.5	21.5	17.7	21.4	19.9	21.4	20.0	22.7	24.7	26.7	24.2	35.1
Nawam Eliya	103,574	21.3	21.7	17.5	16.3	16.3	20.0	17.6	23.4	17.4	15.2	16.0	20.4
Badulla	51,758	25.0	21.8	22.4	22.8	22.2	22.0	22.6	22.9	19.4	21.2	27.3	23.4
Ratnapura	16,642	31.1	25.7	22.8	27.2	23.7	22.6	30.5	20.6	28.5	30.3	45.5	34.4
Kegalla	4,499	24.2	20.1	23.1	25.6	24.2	23.0	31.0	41.8	41.7	26.0	40.2	31.0
Colombo	8,302	14.0	14.5	14.9	16.1	14.4	18.3	31.3	40.5	26.1	41.7	54.7	40.2
Kalutara	15,061	19.3	16.3	15.1	16.9	16.0	19.9	47.9	45.0	50.6	39.9	20.0	35.2

The most unhealthy districts are the low-country districts of Colombo and Kalutara, and they are also the most unhealthy for the estate Tamil population, and as a rule show low birth-rates and high death-rates, but in both the estate population is comparatively small. At page 219 of the Census Report for 1901, Volume I, it is, however, stated that "the health of the large coolie population on the estates in the various districts has been separately considered since 1893, and information has now been collected which reveals the need of measures for the relief of coolies of estates in the Colombo, Kegalla, and Kalutara districts, who seem to suffer from unfavourable sanitary conditions." Most excellent permanent lines are maintained on most estates. The houses are of brick or stone, with iron, shingle, tiled, and occasionally thatched roofs.

45. The medical wants of immigrant labourers in the planting districts are provided for by Ordinance No. 17 of 1880 as amended by Ordinances Nos. 18 of 1881 and 9 of 1882. An export duty is levied on tea, coffee, cacao, and cinchona, which, with fees for attendance on sick labourers on estates and hospital charges, constitutes a medical aid fund, which is devoted towards defraying the cost of the medical care of labourers on estates. Over 30 hospitals and dispensaries in charge of medical officers have been provided at important centres, where sick labourers can be received as indoor or outdoor patients, and there are more than 30 dispensaries in charge of medical assistants, where labourers can receive outdoor treatment free at any hour. Estates have been grouped into districts, and Superintendents can in urgent cases call in the medical officer or medical assistant, who is bound to visit sick labourers when required to do so. The charge for each visit to the estate is Rs. 2.50, which goes to the credit of the medical aid fund. Estate labourers are admitted to hospital, attended on the estate, or at the dispensary, only on a written request signed by the person in charge of the estate, unless the case is serious. An estate or group of estates which maintains a dispenser and a suitable building for a dispensary is allowed a certain quantity of drugs free and others at cost price for the exclusive use of estate labourers. The dispenser is appointed by, and is under the supervision of, the Superintendent of the estate, which pays his salary,

but his appointment and retention in employ is subject to the approval of the Principal Civil Medical Officer. An estate dispensary and its dispenser, however, form no part of the Civil Medical Department or of the Government service.

46. Under section 20 of Ordinance No. 17 of 1880, certain duties are imposed on Superintendents of estates, of which the following are the chief:—
Labour laws. Inspection.

- (a) to maintain the lines in fair sanitary condition;
- (b) to inform himself of all cases of sickness on the estate and to take necessary measures;
- (c) to send labourers to hospital on a written requisition from the medical officer in charge of the district unless the labourer refuses to go;
- (d) to send for the District Medical Officer in cases of serious illness or accident;
- (e) to inform the District Medical Officer within 48 hours of every birth and death upon the estate;
- (f) to supply every female labourer employed on the estate giving birth thereon to a child with sufficient food and lodging for 14 days after the birth, and to take care that the labourer is not required to work on the estate for one month unless the District Medical Officer shall report sooner that she is fit to work.

It is also the duty of every kangany employed on an estate to inform the Superintendent of every case of sickness in his gang.

There are no provisions for the regular and periodic inspections of gardens by the ordinary civil officers as in Assam, nor is the management controlled in any way except under the Medical Ordinance. Regular inspection by medical officers was introduced for a time some years ago, but has been discontinued. If an epidemic such as cholera or small-pox occurs on an estate, a report has to be sent at once to the Government medical officer, who visits the estate and is empowered to issue instructions which have to be carried out. An estate may be placed in quarantine if necessary with a cordon of police. The power of inspection by the Government medical officer or the Government Agent is in fact held in reserve, and is exercised in case of necessity.

By the amending Labour Ordinance No. 7 of 1890 wages are payable "within 60 days from the expiration of the month during which such wages shall have been earned," and the labourer is exempt from punishment for neglect or refusal to work when wages are overdue, no demand on his part being necessary if the wages due exceed the sum of Rs. 10. He is privileged to sue in a Court of Requests for all pay due, and one labourer may sue on behalf of others, if the magistrate is satisfied that he has their authority, without naming the defendant, the case being instituted against the proprietor of the particular estate. Seduction of labour, or "crimping" as it is termed, is provided for under the Ordinance 11 of 1865, and is punishable with fine not exceeding £5 in respect of each labourer seduced, harboured, concealed, or retained, and with imprisonment, which may extend to three months. The Ceylon Labour Ordinance in fact goes further than the Assam Labour and Emigration Act, VI of 1901, in that the duty of taking "reasonable precautions" to ascertain that the labourers taken into service are not bound by contract to serve another employer is imposed by section 20 on employers. Desertion is punishable under the same Ordinance, and deserters may be directed to return to work instead of being imprisoned. There is also a provision that the period of absence without leave or of imprisonment shall not be counted as part of the period of service. Coolies cannot be arrested without a warrant, but they are sometimes recovered by letter from other estates. The kangany is supposed to look after his gang. The money in the shape of "advances" is not lent to the coolie, but to the kangany, so that when the coolie absconds the estate's security is depreciated, but the kangany continues to be held responsible for the debt. Of course, if a coolie absconds to the "coast" it is impossible to obtain extradition for the breach of what is really a civil contract.

47. The question of the adequacy of the labour supply is much debated. Some estates experience no difficulty. A great deal depends on the management. It is not, however, every kangany who can or will recruit labour from "the coast." If a kangany is well known, has property, influence, and relatives in the villages, he is successful. If the harvests are good in Southern India fewer coolies offer. But there are kanganies who have no intention of recruiting labour from India, who obtain advances to spend the money in Ceylon, to remit it to relatives at home, or to invest it in buying land. The Labour Ordinance

provides for this species of fraud, but it is no doubt difficult to prove misappropriation. The fact that "advances" up to 60 rupees a head are paid for coolies already in the island appears to indicate that coolies cannot always be obtained from the "coast" to the extent desired. The rapidity with which estates were opened out a few years ago created an unusual demand for trained labour, which could not be obtained legitimately. This initiated a pernicious competition, which has resulted in the offer of increasing "advances" to obtain labour and the consequent increased indebtedness of the coolie. On some estates, too, a system appears to exist of making over the entire pay of a head kangany's gang to the kangany, instead of paying each coolie direct after deducting a proportion of his monthly pay for indebtedness. This practice is generally condemned. It cannot but react prejudicially on recruitment, and it also seems to be clear that if coolies are taken on without enquiry up to 60 rupees a head it is not to the interest of kanganies to recruit labour from India. "Advances," in fact, instead of being "coast advances," become a retaining fee to keep kanganies and coolies on the estate. Gangs have been traced from one estate to another, and the result has been compared to a game of post, in which no one gains; though higher advances are given all round, the force is not increased on any particular estate, while the labourers already on the estate are necessarily unsettled by extravagant offers made to secure outsiders. These, however, are extreme instances. It has been recognised recently that the kangany requires supervision in the recruiting districts, and a scheme is on foot for the appointment of a Labour Agent on a salary of Rs. 12,000 per annum, with two assistants on Rs. 5,000 each. It is proposed to raise funds by subscription at the rate of 10 cents per cultivated acre, and to ask Government to pay half the salary of the Agent. Proposals have also been made to limit by agreement the rate per head on coolies taken only locally to 30 rupees, and to discourage and discontinue the practice which exists on some estates of making over the whole of the coolie's monthly wages to the kangany. Committees recommend that the balance of the coolie's pay should be paid into his own hands monthly or bi-monthly, deductions from "advances" being entered in the check roll and made from the individual's pay with discretion and with his consent. Of course, many estates experience no trouble whatever with their kanganies, who honestly and regularly recruit labour from India when necessary. Difficulties are doubtless often exaggerated, and isolated cases are calculated to convey wrong impressions. Enough, however, has been said to indicate that labour difficulties exist in Ceylon, as elsewhere. Of course, indebtedness is a serious evil. There is no inducement to work when the coolie is deeply in debt, and if, in addition, his pay is made over to his kangany, the result must be a minimum of work while the kangany is obliged to supply him with rice for fear he should abscond. Protective legislation has even been suggested to deal with the indebtedness of coolies and kanganies.

Competition for labour already in the island, resulting in heavy advances and the increased indebtedness of coolies, and want of supervision of kanganies in the recruiting districts, which is, however, being dealt with, are evils, but by no means necessary or inherent in the system. It has been said that the abundance of labour in 1900 resulted in the return of disappointed labourers to their homes without work, or such sums as they expected to earn, but, if this is true, the effect should be merely temporary. Some estates have abundance of labour and many consider that there is a sufficiency of labour in the island if the coolie is given sufficient inducement to work.

48. Complaints are made from time to time as regards the prevalence of "bolting," and with reference to the increase of "notice giving" by coolies and kanganies who quit employment without paying the debts due to their estates, and against whom the civil law provides an insufficient remedy. "Bolters" can be arrested by warrant, and the offence is punishable with imprisonment, but the penalty is rarely enforced. As a rule, the kangany pays any debts incurred by the absconder and induces him to return to the estate. Similarly, seduction and harbouring is punishable under the Ordinance, but advantage is seldom taken of the law. As elsewhere, successful managers prefer to manage their labour without having recourse to the Police Courts. It is said that absconders are generally discovered sooner or later, and that the cases in which a kangany fails to recover the coolie or his debt are very rare. Quitting employment after payment of debts due to the estate is not regarded as an unmitigated evil, as it is recognised that the knowledge that he is free to leave a plantation is a powerful factor in inducing the labourer to come over from India. It is sometimes said that the system of *tundus*, or preliminary discharge notes, which was originated as a matter of convenience between Superintendents, is abused, and in any case the employment of coolies without *tundus*, or references from the last employer, is condemned. This would seem to be a matter which could be dealt with by Associations, but combination with so many

Relations between employers and employed.

divergent interests is not an easy matter. The relations between employers and employes are said to be generally satisfactory. In the depressed condition of the tea industry, the labourer has no doubt suffered in the general economy. An instance was given in one district in which increased demands on the part of the estate management had resulted in a riot, but it cannot be said that such disturbances are of frequent occurrence.

It can scarcely, however, be contended that the coolie in Ceylon has been unaffected by the same causes which operated to the disadvantage of the labourer in Assam. A too rigorous application of the half-haziri principle is not absolutely unknown, and regular work is not always provided. No doubt, reduction of expenditure was an absolute necessity at the period of greatest depression, and it was perhaps inevitable that the labourer should suffer in the process. Irregular employment and the high price of rice are assigned among the causes which affect the coolie's indebtedness.

On the whole, it is to be doubted whether the coolie in Ceylon is better off than his confrère in Assam. In Ceylon the cost of rice is very great, and living is more expensive generally. In many districts the coolie has no subsidiary means of livelihood. He has no land to cultivate, and can keep no cattle. He is dependent on his daily wage, which no doubt is high. But it is admitted that, for one reason or another, he works barely five days in the week on the average. He is a freer agent, when too much is not left to the kangany, than the Assam labourer, but he is always in debt. "The coolie" it has been said "is born lives and dies, in debt." In Assam the coolie, at any rate, is always paid direct, and he receives his wages with regularity on nearly all estates. The chronic impecuniosity of the coolie, however, in his home in Southern India is a matter of notoriety, and his escape from a condition of agrestic slavery in his native district is entirely due to the development of the planting industry. His indebtedness and dependence on his kangany are not therefore without precedent, and but for the adverse effect on the prosperity of the industry which has contributed so much to his welfare the matter would be of less importance.

PART IV.—CONCLUSION.

49. Under the systems described, the methods of recruitment in the Duars, Madras, and Ceylon have certain resemblance, in that in each case the theory is that the recruiter,—whether termed sirdar, maistry, or kangany,—obtains his gang from villages with which he has a personal connection, and the relationship continues on the garden, the labour force being controlled by their gangman, who is pecuniarily interested in exacting work from them, and in seeing that their interests are looked after. On the contrary, under the Assam Immigration Acts, a system has grown up of recruiting through contractors, who reside in the recruiting districts and whose responsibility may be said to end exactly where it ought to begin. It has been said that the main feature of the present situation is the break-down of the sirdari system. The intention of the new Act VI of 1901 was to encourage recruiting by garden sirdars. If so, the object has not been obtained, and some are disposed to lay the blame on the provisions of Act VI. It has been shown, however, in the case of the Duars, where no labour laws exist, and where an absolutely free labour system prevails, that there is considerable difficulty in obtaining sufficient labour, at any rate from the Chota Nagpur districts, which have been hitherto the main source of supply for a tract where, for climatic reasons, only aboriginal races appear to thrive. It appears to have been assumed in some quarters that all difficulties in regard to recruitment would disappear with the repeal of Act VI; but this view is hardly supported by the recent experience of the Duars. There is no doubt that the enormous demand for labour generally has resulted in a scarcity of that commodity in the nearest and best recruiting districts and that the quality and quantity available has declined. No legislation can effect this, though doubtless the simplification of labour laws and the removal of such restrictions as exist, may tend to ameliorate the position. It is well, however, to recognize facts, and not to be over-sanguine.

The point has been touched on in the report for the Duars, which is the most interesting district for purposes of comparison, owing to its proximity to the Assam Valley, and the fact that the labour supply is largely drawn from the same localities. As regards recruitment, it is evident that geographical position, which no one can alter, though communications may be improved, is in favour of the Duars as well as a free labour system. It stands to reason that, other things being equal, the coolie naturally prefers to proceed to the district nearest his home, particularly when he is not asked to bind himself under a long indenture. On the other hand, the advantage lies with Assam in working the labour once it has been obtained.

50. The difficulty of making any suggestions to improve matters in Assam consists in the fact that, from the first, Assam has been committed to a system of its own. The indenture system is not found to exist elsewhere in India or Ceylon. In Madras, contracts up to a maximum period of a year are recognized as a species of harvest law, but they are rarely entered into with the coolie direct. In Ceylon, the labourer is a monthly servant. The law provides for contracts exceeding a term of one month up to a maximum of three years, but it is a dead letter. In Madras, however, the area under tea is inconsiderable, the introduction of tea culture recent, and the system is based on the requirements of coffee cultivation, which does not involve the residence of a permanent labour force on the estates. In the Nilgiris and the Wynaad imported labourers are within easy reach of their homes.

"The great difference between the conditions of the two industries consists in the fact that in Southern India there is an annual immigration of about four-fifths of the whole labour force, while in Assam, owing to the greater permanence of the labour, due primarily to the distance from which it has to be brought, which has led to the legislation of contracts for a term of four years, the annual immigration only amounts to one-twentieth of the total labour force."

This report does not deal with the Native State of Travancore, in which there are now 25,000 acres under tea, giving employment to more than 20,000 labourers, but the Resident observes that "coolies go up regularly every year into the mountains from the adjacent Tamil districts of Tinnevely, Coimbatore, and Madura, in the Madras Presidency, as willingly as hop-pickers go into Kent." In Ceylon tea rose into importance as recently as 1885-86. Here, too, the cultivation of coffee in its palmy days had encouraged an annual immigration of labourers from Southern India, so that tea from the outset had the advantage of a standing connection with the nearest Madras labour districts. Latterly, everything has been done to encourage immigration, the coolie being taken charge of by Government on arrival at the Madras ports, the principal of which, Tuticorin, is only a few hours by rail from the chief recruiting centres.* Circumstances in Assam were altogether different, though there has been a great alteration within the last few years. Till October 1883, the voyage from Dhubri to Dibrugarh by steamer occupied 15 days, before the river mail service was started. Act I of 1882 which was presumably enacted to meet a state of affairs when the journey from Chota Nagpur to the tea districts of the Assam Valley involved a longer and more troublesome experience than the voyage from India to England, nevertheless remained in force till 1901, though by the opening of the Assam-Bengal Railway, and acceleration of river routes, the circumstances had been altogether changed. Through communication by rail has now been established from Chitragong and Chandpur to Sylhet and Cachar, and with Upper Assam through the North Cachar Hills; and the Assam Valley line, which ends at Gauhati, will shortly be linked up with Dhubri and consequently with the Bengal system.

51. The most salient feature in the working of the Assam labour system is the fact that advantage is taken of the existence of various labour laws, which are worked side by side as expediency directs. The Labour Law of Assam is contained in Act VI of 1901. Act XIII of 1859 is also utilized to a considerable extent, particularly in the Surma Valley, where it has almost superseded Act VI. A hybrid species of contract under section 492, Indian Penal Code, and Act XIII of 1859 is also employed. Specimens of contracts under Act XIII and section 4 2, Indian Penal Code, will be found in the (Appendix No. 20). The term of contract under Act XIII of 1859 is often expressed in days, and a one, two, or three years' contract is accordingly for 313, 626, or 939 days, the practice being to exclude the Sundays or weekly holidays. It is obvious that a contract for 939 days, if worked out in $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, or $\frac{3}{4}$ days or *haziris*, may be extended to an indefinite period, but on the whole the Act is not unduly strained, and the system of advances, while it gives the employer a hold on the labourer, is also much appreciated by the latter, to whom the receipt of a lump sum in cash is of considerable consequence. In Sylhet, agreements under Act XIII are often for a year of 313 days, an advance of 6 rupees or 8 rupees being given. Coolies are imported into both valleys on contracts executed in the recruiting districts under section 492, Indian Penal Code, and under mixed agreements containing the provisions of Act XIII of 1859 and section 492, Indian Penal Code, the cost of importation apparently being considered the advance required under the former Act. Cases under section 492, Indian Penal Code, are very rarely instituted, as the section provides no means of enforcing a contract and the punishment of a defaulter is of less importance than specific performance. Under Act XIII of 1859 a contract need not be in writing, it may be for a term certain, or for

* The railway fare from Trichinopoly to Tuticorin is Rs. 2, from Madura to Tuticorin Rs. 1, and from Tinnevely to Tuticorin 6 annas.

specified work or "otherwise," and a breach of contract does not involve immediate punishment, but entails in the first instance such an order as might emanate from a Civil Court. Under section 492, Indian Penal Code, every contract for work must be written, the term cannot exceed three years, and the breach of contract itself is punishable, the court having no authority to order specific performance. The chief objections to Act XIII from the employer's point of view are uncertainty in its interpretation, the fact that it does not enforce the ultimate performance of the contract, and the absence of provisions against enticement of labour. On the other hand, as the Act is sometimes worked in Assam, want of finality is a serious objection. The practice as regards days of absence from work is copied from the provisions of Act VI, with this difference, that under Act XIII there is practically no arbiter except the employer. The working of this Act has been discussed at considerable length in paragraph 21 of the Resolution on Labour Immigration into Assam for the year 1902-03, the general conclusion arrived at being that "in the Assam Valley Act XIII benefits by its association with Act VI, whereas in the Surma Valley it suffers from this association."

52. It appears that in the Surma Valley only 2,399 coolies were indentured under Act VI contracts at the end of June 1903, out of a total labour force of 258,940 persons, while the extent to which Act XIII had superseded Act VI as a basis for local contracts is indicated by the fact that only seven such contracts were executed in the two Surma Valley districts in 1902-1903. It is clear from this that the Labour Act is not regarded with favour in Sylhet and Cachar, and that its provisions are presumably unsuited to the conditions of those districts. The question then arises as to the wisdom or policy of retaining a special Act for the benefit of some 2,400 persons. It has been frequently suggested that the Act interferes with the freedom of recruitment. That it is possible to recruit satisfactorily outside the Act is shown by the increase in the number of coolies, nearly 3,000, imported into the district of Sibsagar under section 492, Indian Penal Code. An alternative proposal therefore presents itself:—(1) The repeal of Act VI in Sylhet and Cachar, and possibly in the lower districts of the Assam Valley, and the retention of the Act as it stands in the upper districts; (2) or the incorporation of Act XIII in the Labour Act with provisions to meet the system of advances. The difficulty, however, of making any suggestions as regards labour laws for the Province as a whole consists in the extreme divergence of conditions in the Surma and Assam Valleys, but in any case the retention of an Act which is not used in any particular area appears supererogatory. The proposal is therefore put forward for the repeal of Act VI in the Surma Valley. No special labour laws exist in Chittagong, which is connected by rail with Sylhet and Cachar, and it has been shown that it is quite possible to carry on tea cultivation in the Duars without labour laws, and in Madras and Ceylon without a long period of indenture. Insistence has been laid on improved communications, and it appears desirable that Sylhet and Cachar should now be removed from the category of "Labour districts" under Act VI, and placed on the same footing in the matter of recruitment as the Duars and the district of Chittagong, which may possibly at no remote date be included in the Province of Assam. If it is decided to repeal Act VI as regards the Surma Valley districts, the retention of Act XIII of 1859, which is practically the only labour law in use at present, is desirable. The alternative would be the provision for local contracts and advances in an appendix to Act VI. The revision of this somewhat cumbrous piece of legislation by the addition of provisions for local contracts other than those contemplated under sections 118 and 121 might, however, be considered premature, in view of the fact that the whole Act was revised after prolonged discussion so recently as three years ago. The replacal of Act XIII by a special Act in Madras was mainly undertaken on account of the losses of planters in Native States and the difficulties attendant on extradition, for which Act XIII provided no remedy. The difficulty of extradition does not exist in Cachar and Sylhet, except in a minor degree in the case of coolies who abscond into Hill Tipperah, when warrants have to be countersigned by the Political Agent at Comilla. At the same time, the amendment of Act XIII to meet the case of the Southern India planting industry, was not recommended by the Madras Labour Commission, and, in view of the opinions expressed from time to time by the Government of India and the Secretary of State respecting the operation of this Act, it is improbable that any proposals to amend Act XIII itself, or to render its provisions more stringent, will be entertained. It is clear that, granted that some labour law is necessary, the choice lies between the repeal of Act VI and the retention of Act XIII as it stands, or the incorporation of Act XIII with the existing Act VI, or the revision of Act VI, and the substitution of a simpler and shorter law on the lines of the Madras Act, so as to form a single labour law for the whole province. In Madras, the introduction of the new Labour Act I of 1903 in any district *ipso facto* results in the supersession of Act XIII, which is not permitted to run concurrently. An attempt has been made to

present the alternatives assuming to clear the ground that the revision or recasting of Act XIII as a separate Act is beyond expectation.

The most satisfactory solution of the problem apparently would consist in the revision of Act VI, so as to provide a single suitable and less complicated labour law for the whole Province, or such districts as might require one,—the introduction of which into any particular area would effect automatically the repeal of other labour laws, which would be superseded and remain in abeyance so long as the Labour Act continued to be in force. Against this, there is the difficulty of providing a single Act to suit varying conditions, and the fact that the revision of Act VI has been undertaken so recently. The difficulty should not, however, prove insurmountable, and the fact of recent revision or the endurance of Act I of 1882 for 19 years, should not necessarily be regarded as an unanswerable argument or inevitable precedent. In the meantime, the recommendation is made that Act VI should be repealed as regards the districts of Sylhet and Cachar.

53. It has been universally recognised that the periodical return of the coolie to his home, especially with savings, is an excellent advertisement and a powerful stimulant to emigration. Some colonial indentures stipulate for repatriation at their conclusion, and a similar arrangement was originally contemplated when immigration to Assam first became of importance; but the desire to colonise that "neglected Eden" and other considerations prevailed. The question of repatriation agreements has recently been again discussed, and it is well that, even thus late in the day, the system should receive a trial. The labour force in the Assam Valley remitted Rs. 8,420 to their native districts in six months in 1902, and it is admitted that the amount is insignificant. There were 90,879 indentured labourers and 155,660 non-Act adult coolies in the Assam Valley at the close of the year 1902-1903, so that the amount cannot be regarded as excessive or even as a sufficient advertisement of the attractions of the Province. It may, however, be found possible to arrange for the coolie's return to his district more frequently than at present, and so remove the reproach of *nulla vestigia retrorsum*, to quote the trite phrase so often cast up. The "tin ticket" system as worked in Ceylon appears to facilitate the recruitment of new labour and to enable the coolie to revisit his home, and it has been adverted to at some length in the hope that possibly some adaptation of the method may be found of some service. There seems no reason why a similar arrangement should not be made for coolies on the Bengal Railways as has been made on the Ceylon Government lines and with the British India Steam Navigation Company.

In Natal, according to the evidence of a witness before the Labour Commission, who employed 1,200 coolies on his tea estate, Indian labourers, are indentured for five years, and the men are paid 10 shillings a month, rising 1 shilling a month per annum, plus rations and lodgings. Natal imported 15,000 coolies from India between February 1902 and June 1903, which almost corresponds to the period covered by the last Assam Immigration Report. The *Indian Planters Gazette*, in an article on the tea garden labour question, recently stated that "the present literature on the subject of recruitment points to the indisputable fact that greater inducements must be held out to immigrants if they are to be drawn to labour in the tea gardens of Assam." What these inducements are to be, and whether they are to take the form of an increased wage, is a question for the consideration of employers. It is well to recognise, however, that other fields of labour are open to the coolie, and that if "insufficiency of inducements is the cause of the growing paucity of labour for work on the tea plantations of Assam," the adoption of some means of popularising service in the Province is imperative.

It is therefore suggested that a form of repatriation agreement be considered, and the return of coolies to their homes in the recruiting districts periodically be facilitated by the issue of tickets on the Ceylon system.

54. The difficulty of making any suggestions to alter any system which has grown up under special conditions, and which has become crystal-
Simplification of transit and depôt rules.
lised and received the sanction of years, is enormous. Any remarks, therefore, which are offered, are put forward with the utmost diffidence. Some planters advocate a system of State-aided emigration, a phrase which may mean much or little. Should the substitution of Government depôts, as in the Madras ports for emigration to Ceylon and in Ceylon itself, be meant, the proposal would entail a considerable modification of the present depôt system, and would involve the abolition in the recruiting districts of all private depôts, which it cannot be denied have not enjoyed an altogether unblemished reputation in the past. It is constantly asserted that the unpopularity of service in Assam is mainly due to the malpractice of *arkattis* and the abuses in connection with the private depôts, which

some compare to jails. Planters who have had experience both of the Duars and Assam specifically condemn the depôt system as the weak point in the Assam system of recruiting. Others advocate the strict registration of all contractors' coolies in contradistinction to sirdari recruits. It is sufficient to point out that the Duars' system involves no depôt establishments, that depôts are unnecessary for recruitment for the tea and coffee estates in the Madras Presidency, and that, as regards Ceylon, the coolies and recruits find their own way to the Madras ports and that the depôts maintained by Government protect the emigrants from blackmailing by *boutique*-keepers and others in Tuticorin, and have facilitated enquiries and contributed to the suppression of extortion on emigrants *en route* from their villages, which is a common evil, and with regard to which much complaint exists elsewhere. It is accordingly suggested that an enquiry be instituted as to how far the present depôt system is responsible for the discouragement of emigration to Assam, and if so, to what extent the present system should be modified.

55. It has not been found that a system of indenture is considered necessary either in the Duars, Madras, or Ceylon. Contracts may be entered into in Madras for a few months, but the contract is with the maistry and not with the coolies direct.

The deterrent effect of a long period of indenture.

In Ceylon, the Labour Ordinance provides for contracts exceeding one month up to a maximum period of three years, but advantage is hardly ever taken of these provisions, the coolie being regarded as a monthly servant. Those who advocate the repeal of Act VI in Sylhet maintain that the usual practice is to enter into a contract under Act XIII with the coolie for a year. The repeal of Act VI, which has been recommended in the case of the Surma Valley, will leave Act XIII untouched, and will remove the grievance, real or supposed, that the provisions of Act VI interfere with recruiting. It may be argued, of course, that Act VI has its advantages both from the employer's and the official standpoint, but the balance of advantage appears to lie with its repeal. The recruitment of labour under section 492, Indian Penal Code, which provides for a maximum term of three calendar years, has been resorted to in one district, where some 3,000 contracts were in force in 1902-1903 under that law. The fact that the importation of labour under a three-years' indenture, while the Labour Act provides for a longer period, has been preferred may be taken into consideration when Act VI comes up for revision. There can be, it is feared, no doubt that the long and indefinite term of agreement acts as a deterrent, and that service in the nearer Bengal tea districts is preferred, where the labourer is not bound down by any period of indenture. Officers who have served in the recruiting districts even assert that the practice of prolonging the term of agreement by the addition of *kuthia* days, or periods of absence, to the original contract has been misunderstood or misrepresented to the aboriginal Sonthali or Chota Nagpuri as a breach of faith. Injudicious and illegal pressure exerted to obtain renewal of contracts would certainly not only be liable to misconstruction, but would exercise a prejudicial effect on recruitment. The damage which may be done by stories carried back by absconders or time-expired coolies who return to their homes is not always realised. But stress has been laid by Associations in Ceylon on the mischief that may result from the tales carried by returned emigrants as regards the indebtedness of coolies and payment through kanganies unless the matter is remedied. In fairness to the employer, it is necessary that periods of absence should be taken into consideration in determining a contract, and so long as finality is provided for, as in the Madras Act, for instance, no harm can result. /)

56. No restrictions whatever are imposed on recruiting for the Duars or in Madras, but there is hardly a parallel, as in both instances the recruiting is for estates situated within the province concerned. When a Madras Act of 1866 was passed it was recognised that a considerable emigration took place to Native States and the Act was passed accordingly, but it was primarily designed to meet the case of irregularities in emigration to Bengal and Assam, and was not made applicable to emigration to Ceylon. There appears to have been no interference at any time with emigration to Ceylon from Madras, and in the days of coffee there was an annual migration of labourers from "the coast" to Ceylon and back again, with often a serious mortality from cholera along the north road in the island. Those who advocate the recruitment of labour for the Surma Valley under the same conditions as for the Duars appear to forget that the system under which labour is employed in the Duars differs radically, owing to the absence of labour laws, which is an even more important factor than greater or less proximity to the recruiting districts. It is for this reason that the repeal of Act VI has been recommended in order that the conditions may be assimilated as far as possible. Otherwise, the proposal might not receive the consideration to which it is entitled. No doubt the Bengal tea industry has the first call on Bengal labour, but if Government has

Government restrictions upon recruiting.

not thought fit to impose restrictions in Madras on the recruitment of labour from that Presidency for employment out of India, it is hoped that the proposal to relieve Assam *bona fide* sirdari recruiting of all restrictions hitherto imposed will at any rate be conceded. In any case, if the Surma Valley districts by the repeal of Act VI cease to be "labour districts," the privilege of recruiting under no stricter conditions than are in force in the Duars will perhaps no longer be withheld. There can be no question but that "local conditions have been very greatly modified by the opening of railway communication" or that the districts of Sylhet and Cachar are healthier and cheaper, and not less accessible, than the sparsely-populated and recently-opened-out tracts under the Bhutan Hills in the Eastern Duars.

57. The relations between planters and coolies in Assam have been adversely commented on within recent years, and attention has been drawn to the frequency with which riots and affrays occur on Assam gardens in comparison with those in other parts of India. Tea cultivation in the recruiting districts of Hazaribagh and Ranchi can hardly be regarded as a serious undertaking. In Darjiling, the conditions of cultivation are entirely different. The bulk of the labour force consists of the local hill women,—in some places it is as high as 75 or 80 per cent. In the Duars, the absence of labour laws from the commencement has placed matters on an entirely different basis. Rightly or wrongly, labour legislation was deemed necessary in the beginning for Assam, and the system has been maintained. Recruitment is on different lines. The sirdari system, which it was hoped the new Act would encourage, has broken down and the undesirable contractor's coolie has on more than one occasion recently been the cause of serious trouble. The system of working the labour, once it has been obtained, is totally different. In Madras, Ceylon, and the Duars the systems differ according to circumstances, but generally they may be described as systems which involve supervision by subordinates who are personally connected with and interested in the individual labour. In Ceylon, the head kangany arranges for the under-kanganies or supervisors of gangs. In Madras, the maistry looks after his gang. In the Duars, the sirdar who owns the gang selects his duffadar to look after them at work. Except in Assam, the coolie belongs more to the gangmen than to the estate. If coolies die or abscond, he bears the brunt of the loss. It is his interest to keep them on the estate, to profit by their labour, and recover them if they desert. In Madras and Ceylon, where tea is chiefly grown in the hills, the system of cultivation is different and the work is less arduous. On the other hand, the coolie generally has not the same opportunities of earning an increment to his wage on the estate or of adding to his income in other ways, as he can in the plains of Assam and the Duars by cultivation and keeping cattle and carts. The expense of recruiting the coolie is greater in Ceylon than in Madras or in the Duars, but he can be obtained from "the coast" for about 20 or 30 rupees, including advances and his railway and steamer fares. He is, therefore, nowhere such a valuable asset as on an estate in Assam. It is unnecessary to recapitulate at length the differences in the various systems, which have been dealt with in the chapters dealing with each locality, nor do suggestions as regards the system of management of estates fall within the province of this report. It is impossible, however, that the differences in methods should not arrest the attention. It is well known that in Assam many gardens work practically with free labour, and have no difficulty in obtaining and retaining their labour so long as the management remains in the same hands. But, as changes must inevitably occur, the fear of possible disorganization consequent on change of management prevents the more extended adoption of a free labour system. In this respect the manager is not always a free agent. It may be observed, generally, that the systems which work through gangmen, be they sirdars in the Duars, maistries or kanganies in Madras and Ceylon, appear on the whole to involve less friction. In Madras and Ceylon the Tamil is no doubt a more tractable and amenable individual than the class of coolie who not infrequently finds his way to Assam gardens, which are often constrained in the present scarcity of labour to accept all that offer. No system ever invented can lay claim to perfection, and difficulties as regards the recruitment and management of labour are not peculiar to Assam, or confined to India, but it is possible that the description, however incomplete, of other systems of recruitment and management of labour on estates may be worth consideration.

58. In Ceylon a special committee was recently appointed to consider and report generally on the present state of the labour question, and recommendations which have been made are being carried into effect in order to deal with local difficulties. In Assam, in spite of improvements in communications, and the rapidity with which the journey to most districts can now be performed, the extraordinary cost involved in the

Explanation of the high cost of labour in Assam.

recruitment of labour is the prime cause of all troubles and difficulties. The recommendation has accordingly been made for the examination and reconsideration of the system of recruitment with particular reference to the existing depôt system which is so persistently alleged to have a discouraging effect on enlistment for Assam. The matter, however, is one which could only be dealt with by a representative committee of experts. The prosperity of the tea gardens, and with them the future of Assam, is at stake, and even if radical changes should involve, to some extent, the sacrifice of vested and individual interests, there is no consideration which should be permitted to outweigh the paramount advantage of employers and labourers. At present the extraordinary difference in cost between recruitment for Assam and the Duars cannot be explained by distance or difficulties of communication or the existence or non-existence of special legislation, but is undoubtedly mainly due to the system of recruitment which in the one case results in the absorption of considerable charges by persons who have often no further interest in the labourer or his employer.

APPENDICES.

	PAGE
PART I—DUARS—	
1.—Statement illustrative of tea cultivation in Jalpaiguri during the calendar year 1902	35
2.—Statement showing the number of tea gardens and acreage under tea in the district of Jalpaiguri, thana by thana, 1881, 1891, 1901	<i>ib.</i>
3 & 4.—Statistics of recruitment	36-37
5.—Comparative statement of working force on Assam and Duars estates...	38
6.—Statement of an average price of rice, district Jalpaiguri, in 1901, 1902, and 1903	39
7.—Statement showing the average price of rice in the tea districts of Assam during 1901, 1902, and 1903	<i>ib.</i>
8.—Annual statement of wages for 12 Duars estates	40
9.—Duars Labour Rules... ..	40-42
 PART II—MADRAS—	
10.—Number of tea gardens, average and approximate strength of labour force	43
11.—Return of cases under Act XIII of 1859 for Nilgiri district in 1903	<i>ib.</i>
12.—Specimen agreement between maistry and planter	43-44
13.—Specimen of agreement between planter and labourer	44
14.—Specimen complaint under section 2, Act XIII of 1859	<i>ib.</i>
15.—Specimen judgment in case under Act XIII of 1859	<i>ib.</i>
 PART III—CEYLON—	
16.—Scheme for labour agency on the Coast	44-45
17.—Specimen tundu or preliminary discharge note	45
18.—Specimen discharge note	46
 PART IV—CONCLUSION—	
19.—Specimen agreement under section 492, Indian Penal Code	<i>ib.</i>
20.—Specimen agreement under section 492, Indian Penal Code, and Act XIII of 1859	46-47

No. 1.—(DUARS.)

Statement illustrative of the state of Tea Cultivation in Jalpaiguri during the calendar year 1902.

District.	Number of gardens or plantations on the 31st December.	Total number of persons employed during the year.		Area, in acres.				Quantity, in lbs., of cured leaf plucked in each garden.	Quantity, in lbs., of tea manufactured in each garden, whether grown in the garden or not.	
		Actual number permanently employed throughout the year.	Average daily number temporarily employed during the year.	Under mature plants.	Under immature plants.	Total area under tea.	Taken up by planters, but not planted.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Jalpaiguri ...	221	38,107	23,558	71,576	4,217	75,793	163,645	121,819,526	31,550,204	
				<i>Maljotes.</i>						
	2	111	10	416	20	436	...	240,705	85,572	
Total ...	223	88,218	23,568	71,992	4,237	76,229	163,645	122,069,231	31,635,776	

Cultivation of 183 acres have been abandoned by Jaintia and other tea gardens.

No. 2.—(DUARS.)

DISTRICT JALPAIGURI.

Statement showing the number of tea gardens and acreage under tea, thana by thana, in 1881, 1891, and 1901.

Name of thana.	1881.			1891.			1901.			
	Number of gardens.	Acreage under tea.	Population.	Number of gardens.	Acreage.	Population.	Number of gardens.	Acreage.	Population.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Jalpaiguri ...	...	...		1	200	330	1	200	319
Duars thanas.	Damdin ...	49	5,134	Figures not available.	49	20,634	45*	29,368	55,477	
	Mynaguri ...	6	1,096		16	10,046	30	26,261	45,029	
	Fulakata		12	4,563	6,426	11*	9,673	14,694
	Alipur		1	250	292	16	10,636	17,658
Total ...	55	6,230		79	35,683	62,318	103	76,158	133,207	

* Decrease in number of gardens is due to amalgamation of grants.

No. 3.—(DUARS.)

Statistics of Recruitment.

Number of gardens.	Acreage.	District of recruitment.	Number of coolies recruited in			Total number of coolies recruited.
			1901.	1902.	1903.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
67	52,703	Chota Nagpur ...	4,939	3,377	4,220	12,536
		Sonthalia ...	1,591	1,541	1,900	5,032
		Chaibassa ...	198	634	905	1,737
		Nepal, etc. ...	1,254	1,350	2,157	4,761
		Total ...	7,982	6,902	9,182	24,066

Number of gardens.	Acreage.	District of recruitment.	1901.			1902.			1903.			1904.		
			Recruiters.	Coolies.	Percentage.	Recruiters.	Coolies.	Percentage.	Recruiters.	Coolies.	Percentage.	Recruiters.	Coolies.	Percentage.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
6	4,690	Chota Nagpur ...	150	477	3.1	187	505	2.7	145	391	2.7	...	...	...
		Sonthalia ...	37	221	3.9	39	123	3.1	55	456	7	...	...	...
6	6,345	Chota Nagpur ...	242	661	1.9	390	518	1.7	370	631	1.4	295	650	1.9
		Sonthalia ...	186	688	3.6	145	380	2.3	124	416	2.3	...	...	...
		Chaibassa ...	21	80	3.8	24	306	8.3	66	186	2.8	...	...	...

Cost of recruitment.

Number of gardens.	Acreage.	District of recruitment.	Year.	Number of coolies.	Cost per head.	Average advances.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8,006	Chota Nagpur ...	1901	822	Rs. a. p. 2 0 9	Rs. a. p. 11 4 0
			1902	184	3 15 9	11 7 0
			1903	413	7 2 9	15 1 0
		Sonthalia ...	1901	122	7 15 6	6 0 0
			1902	229	8 12 3	6 6 0
			1903	275	12 7 0	9 9 0
		Chaibassa ...	1901	Nil	...	...
			1902	50	7 5 6	16 3 0
			1903	214	9 13 0	17 6 0

No. 4.—(DUARS.)

Comparative Statement of cost of coolies recruited from Chota Nagpur in 1899 and 1903 with items of expenditure.

Gardens.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.	Advance on garden.	Advance in recruiting district.	Chattrania' pay.	Total.	Cost per coolie.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

1899.

					Rs. a. p.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1	93	80	27	200	850 0 0	1,950	48	2,848 0 0	14 3 10
2	121	73	23	217	360 0 0	1,314	30	1,704 0 0	7 13 7
3	45	19	12	76	250 0 0	670	30	950 0 0	12 8 0
4	53	39	9	101	300 0 0	720	46	1,066 0 0	10 8 10
5	280	125	41	446	1,515 0 0	3,289	56	4,860 0 0	10 14 4
6	41	23	7	71	230 0 0	462	30	722 0 0	10 2 8
7	62	29	6	97	400 0 0	607	48	1,055 0 0	10 14 0
8	58	33	9	100	290 0 0	853	40	1,183 0 0	11 13 3
9	60	23	9	92	190 0 0	656	22	868 0 0	9 6 11
...	813	444	143	1,400	4,885 0 0	10,521	350	15,256 0 0	10 14 4
						Expenditure ...		3,391 10 3	= 2 6 9

1903.

1	142	53	5	200	518 0 0	2,034	36	2,583 0 0	12 14 7
2	28	12	2	42	285 0 0	859	24	1,168 0 0	27 12 11
3	72	33	1	106	210 12 0	1,193	24	1,427 12 0	13 7 6
4	60	45	8	113	300 14 0	1,211	24	1,595 14 6	14 1 11
5	14	10	1	25	100 0 0	371	12	483 0 0	19 5 1
6	23	18	4	45	220 0 0	785	12	1,017 0 0	22 9 7
...	339	171	21	531	1,689 10 0	6,453	132	8,274 10 6	15 9 3
						Expenditure ...		5,512 15 0	= 10 6 1

NOTE.—Advances on the gardens represent sums advanced to recruiters and include railway fare and diet money down to the recruiting districts; advances in the recruiting districts represent sums to coolies to pay of debts, road and rail expenses, diet money for the return journey, and salary. These amounts are recovered from the coolies who in turn recover from the coolies. Expenditure represents the pay of the manager or assistant on deputation in the recruiting district and that of his staff of clerks and chattrania, and is not recovered.

No. 5—(DUARS.)

Comparative Statement of working force in Assam and Duars estates.

	Total planted area.	1		2		3		Per cent. of individual as per column No. 2.	
		Total.		Individual.		Average.			
		Coolie force.	Per acre.	Coolies at work.	Per acre.	Coolie working days.	Per acre.		
Assam gardens.	No. 1	608	1,518	2.50	1,392	2.29	1,078	1.77	.77
	" 2	634	1,122	1.77	1,035	1.63	860	1.36	.83
	" 3	751	1,313	1.75	1,275	1.70	1,075	1.43	.85
	" 4	1,160	1,710	1.47	1,682	1.41	1,360	1.17	.83
	" 5	639	1,119	1.75	1,036	1.62	800	1.25	.77
	" 6	466	669	1.44	559	1.20	552	1.18	.99
	" 7	791	1,236	1.56	1,103	1.40	963	1.20	.86
	5,049	8,687	1.72	8,032	1.59	6,678	1.32	.83	
Duars gardens.	No. 1	971	1,051	1.08	790	.81	445	.46	.56
	" 2	730	901	1.23	757	1.04	399	.55	.53
	" 3	235	199	.84	219	.93	136	.58	.62
	" 4	1,100	1,042	.95	913	.83	485	.44	.52
		3,036	3,193	1.05	2,679	.88	1,465	.48	.55
	" 5	1,000	1,626	1.62	1,259	1.26	675	.67	.54
	" 6	600	1,014	1.69	800	1.33	373	.62	.47
	" 7	860	948	1.10	773	.90	388	.45	.50
	" 8	1,014	1,313	1.30	1,047	1.03	666	.65	.63
	" 9	1,040	1,195	1.15	1,051	1.01	512	.49	.49
	" 10	1,202	1,502	1.25	889	.74	786	.65	.88
	" 11	730	838	1.15	615	.84	342	.47	.55
	" 12	750	936	1.25	636	.85	445	.59	.70
" 13	780	663	.85	557	.71	347	.44	.62	
	7,976	10,035	1.26	7,627	.96	4,534	.57	.60	

The last column shows the daily percentage of coolies working out of the total coolies (No. 2 column) who have worked one or more days during the month.

No. 6.—(DUARS.)

Statement of average price of rice for 1901, 1902, and 1903.

Months.					Quantities sold per rupee in seers and decimals of a seer of 80 tolas.		
					1901.	1902.	1903.
1					2	3	4
<i>Jalpaiguri (Sadr).</i>					Srs. ch.	Srs. ch.	Srs. ch.
January	...	...	...	...	12 8	12 4	13 6
February	...	...	...	...	12 8	12 11	13 8
March	...	...	...	...	12 8	12 8	13 6
April	...	...	...	...	12 4	12 0	13 0
May	...	...	...	...	11 12	11 8	12 0
June	...	...	...	...	11 4	11 2	11 8
July	...	...	...	...	10 8	10 12	11 6
August	...	...	...	...	10 8	11 0	11 0
September	...	...	...	...	10 4	11 4	11 0
October	...	...	...	...	9 12	11 0	11 0
November	...	...	...	...	9 12	11 0	11 0
December	...	...	...	...	11 14	12 8	11 8
Average	...	...	...	...	11 4	11 10	11 15
<i>Alipur (Subdivision).</i>							
January	...	...	...	...	10 0	14 8	13 0
February	...	...	...	...	10 0	14 8	13 0
March	...	...	...	...	9 8	14 0	12 8
April	...	...	...	...	9 8	13 0	13 0
May	...	...	...	...	9 0	12 8	12 10
June	...	...	...	...	9 0	11 0	12 14
July	...	...	...	...	9 0	10 0	12 8
August	...	...	...	...	11 0	10 0	10 8
September	...	...	...	...	13 8	10 0	12 8
October	...	...	...	...	12 0	10 0	13 0
November	...	...	...	...	13 0	11 8	13 0
December	...	...	...	...	13 0	11 0	13 8
Average	...	...	...	...	10 11	11 13	12 10

No. 7.—(DUARS.)

Statement showing the average price of common rice in the tea districts of Assam during the years 1901, 1902, and 1903.

District.					Quantities sold per rupee in seers and decimals of a seer of 80 tolas.		
					1901.	1902.	1903.
1					2	3	4
Cachar	...	...	...	...	11.7	14.02	14.74
Sylhet	...	...	...	...	10.93	13.98	13.89
Kamrup	...	...	...	...	10.77	12.17	12.72
Darrang	...	...	...	...	10.0	13.25	14.79
Nowgong	...	...	...	...	10.12	10.12	11.83
Sibsagar	...	...	...	...	10.78	11.77	12.18
Lakhimpur	...	...	...	...	9.59	10.79	10.48

No. 8.—(DUARS.)

Annual Statement of wages for 12 gardens, Duars estates.

Gardens.	Men.			Women.			Children.		
	Haziri.	Extra.	Total.	Haziri.	Extra.	Total.	Haziri.	Extra.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Rs. s. p.	Rs. s. p.	Rs. s. p.	Rs. s. p.	Rs. s. p.	Rs. s. p.	Rs. s. p.	Rs. s. p.	Rs. s. p.
No. I ...	47 13 9	11 6 10	59 4 7	35 15 11	18 1 11	49 1 10	14 10 8	...	14 10 8
„ II ...	46 15 2	11 2 7	58 1 9	33 8 8	10 4 7	43 13 3	18 2 8	2 5 3	20 7 6
„ III ...	57 13 6	9 10 7	67 8 0	38 9 7	6 1 11	44 11 6	25 15 6	1 9 8	27 9 2
„ IV ...	47 12 7	6 9 5	54 6 0	32 0 6	6 10 1	38 10 7	13 18 7	4 3 7	18 1 3
„ V ...	40 14 6	27 10 0	58 8 6	33 3 7	8 0 7	41 4 2	16 5 2	5 12 3	23 1 5
„ VI ...	46 1 5	1 12 8	47 14 1	31 6 9	6 0 9	37 7 6	13 10 6	5 10 0	14 0 4
„ VII ...	45 13 6	6 4 5	51 1 11	30 7 8	6 14 6	37 6 2	6 1 9	4 5 0	6 6 2
„ VIII ...	43 15 2	13 6 2	57 5 9	31 10 7	6 14 10	38 9 5	7 3 8	2 2 2	9 5 10
„ IX ...	45 8 2	7 8 9	53 0 11	31 8 7	4 14 3	36 6 10	12 0 6	3 5 6	15 6 0
„ X ...	45 5 6	19 15 11	63 5 5	30 6 1	8 9 9	38 15 10	17 12 6	6 7 6	21 4 0
„ XI ...	52 9 2	17 1 5	69 10 7	42 0 5	5 13 4	47 13 9	12 12 9	1 12 4	14 9 1
„ XII ...	49 10 6	16 10 1	66 4 7	31 13 5	5 14 2	40 11 7	19 11 9	1 8 7	21 4 4

No. 9.—(DUARS.)

INDIAN TEA ASSOCIATION.

Duars Labour Rules.

Rule I.—If coolies shall, when indebted, leave a tea estate belonging to any member of the Indian Tea Association who shall have subscribed these rules under the management of A and be found on another estate belonging to any other member of the said Association who has subscribed these rules under the management of B, THEN, if at any time within three calendar months from the date of the arrival of the coolies on B's estate, A shall write to B stating that the coolies were employed under A's management, B shall thereupon either turn such coolies out of his estate or pay to A the money due by the coolies at A's estate, whichever B prefers.

NOTE.—In the application of the foregoing rule an account of the money due by and to the coolies at A's estate authenticated by A shall be accepted by B as correct.

Rule II.—If a recruiter authorised in writing by A, the Manager of an estate belonging to any member of the Indian Tea Association who shall subscribe these rules, to recruit coolies for such estate shall be sent by A to a recruiting district for coolies, and on his return from such recruiting district with or without coolies, such recruiter shall proceed to an estate belonging to any member of the Association who shall subscribe these rules in the management of B, THEN, if at any time within six months from the date on which the recruiter on his return shall proceed to B's estate, A shall write to B informing him of the fact that the recruiter was employed by A to recruit coolies for the estate under his management, B shall, in his option, either retain the recruiter and coolies and repay to A the recruiting expenses incurred and the advances made by him (A), or he shall turn the recruiter and coolies out of his estate on being repaid by A the recruiting expenses incurred and the advances made by him (B).

NOTE A.—A recruiter to be considered as such under the foregoing rule must for at least three calendar months immediately preceding have been under the employment of the manager who grants him a recruiting certificate or an advance of money. Or a recruiter may be engaged in his own country provided he has not previously taken a recruiting certificate or an advance for recruiting purposes from any other employer or estate.

NOTE B.—In the application of the foregoing rule a statement authenticated by A of the cost of recruiting coolies and of the sums advanced or paid by A to or on account of the recruiter and coolies if any shall be accepted by B as correct and vice versa, provided that the amount claimed as cost of recruiting shall in no case exceed Rs. 3 per adult.

DEFINITION.—In the operation of the above rules it is understood that the words coolie or coolies include sardars and all servants of a tea estate drawing less than a pay of Rs. 20 per mensem.

Rule III.—The questions to be determined by arbitration under the above rules and any dispute touching the true intent or construction or the application or the incidents or consequences of these

otherwise in relation to the premises shall be referred to two indifferent persons or an umpire to be appointed in manner hereafter mentioned, and the following provisions shall apply to such reference :

- (1) An arbitrator shall not be deemed to have been appointed unless he shall have signified in writing his willingness to act as arbitrator in the reference.
- (2) Either of the parties concerned may by notice in writing require the other of them to refer the question or dispute to arbitration. The party giving such notice shall therein state the name and address of the arbitrator appointed by him. The party receiving such notice shall appoint an arbitrator and intimate in writing the name and address of such arbitrator to the arbitrator appointed by the party giving such notice. If the party receiving such notice shall for 10 days after the receipt thereof neglect or refuse to appoint an arbitrator and to intimate the name and address of such arbitrator in manner aforesaid, the party giving such notice may report the matter to Darjeeling and Duars Sub-Committee of the Indian Tea Association, hereafter in these rules referred to 'as the Sub-Committee, and the Sub-Committee shall thereupon appoint an arbitrator on behalf of the second party to the reference, and the arbitrator so appointed shall have the like powers to act as if he had been appointed by such party.
- (3) In case an arbitrator who shall have been appointed shall die and neglect or refuse or become incapable to act as arbitrator before an award shall have been made as to the matter referred, the surviving or continuing arbitrator shall report the fact of such death, neglect, refusal or incapacity to the Sub-Committee, and the Sub-Committee shall thereupon appoint some other person to be arbitrator in the place of the arbitrator so dying, neglecting or refusing or becoming incapable to act, and the arbitrator so appointed shall have the same powers and authority as the arbitrator in whose place he shall have been appointed.
- (4) Before entering on the business of the reference the arbitrators shall appoint an umpire to act in the reference. In case the arbitrators who shall be appointed shall not appoint an umpire before entering on the business of the reference, or in the event of an umpire appointed by them dying or neglecting or refusing or becoming incapable to act as umpire before an award shall have been made as to the matter referred, the arbitrators shall report the matter to the Sub-Committee and the Sub-Committee shall thereupon appoint an umpire who shall have the like power to act as if he had been appointed as umpire by the arbitrators before entering on the business of the reference.
- (5) Superintendents or Managers of tea estates in the Duars district shall be the only persons eligible to act as arbitrators or umpires.
- (6) The arbitrators shall make their award in writing within three weeks after entering on the business of the reference or on or before any later date to which the arbitrators by any writing signed by them may from time to time enlarge the time for making their award and the umpire shall make his award within three weeks after the original or extended time for making the award of the arbitrators shall have expired, or on or before any later date to which the umpire may from time to time enlarge the time for making his award.
- (7) Arbitrators shall each receive a fee of Rs. 52 and an umpire shall receive a fee of Rs. 64 for acting in the business of the reference. The fees of the arbitrators and umpire except as to the amount thereof, and all travelling and other expenses incurred or paid by the arbitrators or umpire, shall be in the discretion of the arbitrators or umpire who may direct to and by whom such fees and expenses or any part thereof shall be paid.
- (8) The award which shall be made by the arbitrators or umpire shall be final and binding upon the parties to the reference respectively.
- (9) Neither of the parties to the reference shall make any objection to the award of the arbitrators or umpire by reason or on account of any technical or legal defect therein or any informality, omission, delay or error of proceeding in or about the same or in relation thereto or on any pretence, suggestion, charge or allegation of collusion or confederacy or on any similar or other ground.

Rule IV.—These rules shall be binding on members of the Indian Tea Association who shall subscribe the same in the like manner and to the same extent as the rules of the Association are binding on such members save that if any member of the Association who shall have subscribed these rules shall be desirous of withdrawing from his submission thereto, he shall be at liberty so to withdraw on giving to the Sub-Committee six calendar months' notice of his intention so to do.

Rule V.—Members of the Indian Tea Association who shall subscribe these rules may by a resolution passed by a majority of not less than three-fourths of such members as may be present in person at a meeting of such members of which one month's previous notice shall have been given, from time to time alter all or any of these rules, or make new rules to the exclusion of or in addition to these rules and any rules so made shall be deemed to be of the same validity as if they had been originally contained herein and shall be subject in like manner to be altered or modified by any subsequent similar resolution. The Sub-Committee may by notice at any time convene a meeting of the members of the Indian Tea Association who shall have subscribed these rules for the purpose of considering and passing any proposed alterations or exclusion of or any addition to these rules or any subsequent rules that may at any time be made in modification or exclusion of or in addition to these rules. Such notice shall specify the place, day and hour of meeting, and the rule which it shall be proposed to alter or exclude or the addition, if any, which it shall be proposed to make and such notice

shall be given one month before any meeting by letter addressed to each member of the Indian Tea Association who shall have subscribed these rules and who shall not have previously withdrawn his submission thereto.

The undersigned agree to abide by the above Rules.

Estate Name.	Proprietors' or Agents' Signature.
Ellenbarrie Tea Co., Ltd. ...	<i>Duncan Brothers & Co. Signed Rules as from 1st May 1900.</i>
Manabarrie Tea Co., Ltd. ...	
Meenglas Tea Co., Ltd. ...	
Chalouni Tea Co., Ltd. ...	
Nagaisuree Tea Co., Ltd. ...	
Hope Tea Co., Ltd. (Hope & Jiti Divisions) ...	
Carron Tea Co., Ltd. ...	
Assam Duars Tea Co., Ltd. ...	
Newlands, Sankos & Gandrapara Divisions ...	
Birpara Tea Co., Ltd. ...	
Hantapara Tea Co., Ltd. ...	
Phaskowa Tea Co., Ltd. ...	
Huldibari Tea Co., Ltd. ...	
Imperial Tea Co., Ltd.—		Davenport & Co. Ditto ditto.
Central Duars Division ...	
Chuapara " ...	
Jainti " ...	
New Glencoe " ...	
Washabarrie " ...	<i>McLeod & Co. Ditto ditto.</i>
The Consolidated Tea Lands Co., Ltd.—	
Dam Dim Division ...	
Kumlai " ...	
Rungamuttee " ...	
Nakhati " ...	<i>Finlay, Muir & Co. Ditto ditto.</i>
Soongachi " ...	
Nowera Nuddy " ...	
Cachar & Duars Tea Co., Ltd.—	
Meteli Division ...	
Baradighi Tea Co., Ltd. ...	<i>Fardine, Skinner & Co, Ditto ditto.</i>
Buxa Duars Tea Co., Ltd. ...	
Leesh River Tea Co., Ltd. ...	
Killicott Tea Co., Ltd. ...	<i>p. pro. Shaw, Wallace & Co., G. Kingsley.</i>
Singlo Tea Co., Ltd.—	
Telipara Tea Estate ...	<i>King Hamilton & Co. Ditto ditto.</i>
Bundapani Tea Estate ...	
Empire of India and Ceylon Tea Co.—	
Hahaipatha Tea Estate ...	
Dangua Jhar Tea Estate ...	
Good Hope Tea Estate ...	<i>Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co., Ditto.</i>
Tasati Tea Estate ...	
The Duars Tea Co., Ltd.—	
Bamandanga Division ...	
Tondoo " ...	
Ghutea " ...	<i>A Oliver, Joint Superintendent. Ditto ditto.</i>
Nagrakatta " ...	
Indong " ...	
Bhogotpore " ...	
Hilla " ...	
Grassmore " ...	
Kurti " ...	
The Bullabaree Tea Estate ...	
The Dn. of the Nedeem Tea Co., Ltd.—	
Sylee Division ...	
Nya Sylee ...	<i>Begg, Dunlop & Co. Ditto ditto.</i>
Chengmari ...	
Baintbarie ...	
Kumai ...	
Lookson ...	
Dalgaon ...	
Toorsa ...	
Phoolbarie Tea Co., Ltd. ...	<i>Octavius Steel & Co. Signed Rules 28th November 1900.</i>
Bagracote ...	
Baintguri ...	
Toonbari ...	<i>Messrs. King Hamilton & Co. Signed Rules 7th January 1901.</i>
	<i>W. S. Cresswell & Co. Signed Rules 25th January 1902.</i>
	<i>R. H. Morton, Esq., Signed Rules 2nd April 1902.</i>

No. 10.—(MADRAS.)

Number of Tea Gardens, Acreage, and Approximate Strength of Labour Force.

MADRAS tea districts.	Number of tea gardens.	Acreage under tea.	Strength of permanent labour force.	Daily average of temporary employes.	Estimated number on tea estates.	Number annually imported.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Nilgiris	113	7,664	Not given	Not given	5,000-6,000	Not given.
Malabar-Wynaad	25	4,085	334*	2,056*	...	5,000†
Coimbatore (Anamalais)	6	592	46*	77*	...	Not given
Total Madras tea districts	144	12,341	380	2,133	...	...
Travancore	80	24,879	12,893	7,217	...	Not given.

* Collector states that figures given by him are unreliable.

† Estimated by Collector.

No. 11.—(MADRAS.)

Return of Cases under Act XIII of 1859 from Nilgiri district in 1903.

Cases by plantors against maistries.			Cases by planter against coolies.			Cases by maistries against coolies.			Total number of cases under Act XIII brought to trial in 1903.
Number in which accused were brought to trial.	Number of convictions.	Number in which accused admitted contract and receipt of advance.	Number in which accused were brought to trial.	Number of convictions.	Number in which accused admitted contract and receipt of advance.	Number in which accused were brought to trial.	Number of convictions.	Number in which accused admitted contract or receipt of advance.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
55	31	32	28	26	24	149	93	96	232
Number of tea gardens.			Number of coffee estates.	Acreage under tea.	Acreage under coffee.	Estimated number of coolies on tea and coffee estates.			
11			12	13	14	15			
113			476	7,664	25,981	15,000 to 20,000			

No. 12.—(MADRAS.)

Specimen of Agreement between a Maistry and Planter.

Memorandum of Agreement entered into this 6th day of May 1903 between the manager of A—tea estate and M—maistry of—village,—taluk, Coimbatore district.

This is to certify that the said M—maistry does hereby contract and agree to work on the A—estate with a gang of 20-able-bodied coolies, of which 10 are to be men and 10 are to be women.

To weed, dig, manure, farm, etc., and to do any estate work that may be required of me and my coolies.

That I am to receive pay at the rate of 10 per cent. on the earnings of my coolies, provided, I have my full gang otherwise according to the wish of the manager whose decision I agree to accept as final. Rate of pay for men Rs. 6 and good able-bodied women Rs. 4 as existing in the district. That I must have my full gang every day, viz., 10 men and 10 women, on the roll-call. In the event of my coolies being short, sick, or unable to do any work, I agree to get substitutes instead. That I and my coolies agree to work for a period of 11 calendar months from date of our arrival on the estate on 15th June 1903.

That I and my coolies shall submit to discipline and promptly obey all lawful orders which may be received from persons in authority over myself and my coolies.

In consideration of the above agreement I the said M—maistry do hereby acknowledge to have received an advance of Rs. 100 only. That I agree to repay the above advance in the 5 following instalments :—

	Rs.
31st August 1903	20
31st October „	20
31st December „	20
28th February 1904	20
30th April „	20

The contents of the agreement have been translated to me in my own language before the undermentioned witnesses.

Witness.

M.—maistry.

No. 13.—(MADRAS.)

Specimen of Agreement between Planter and Labourer.

Memorandum of agreement entered into on the 9th day of November 1902 between Mr. of P estate, district Coimbatore, and C , son of N of N village, Mettapalaigam taluq, district Coimbatore—

Witnesseth that in consideration of the sum of Rs. 60 this day advanced to me for work to be done under this contract and to be repaid by deduction from the sums to accrue due to me for the services I hereby agree to render, I, the said C labourer do hereby contract with the said Mr. to do all such works on or in connection with the P estate in the Nilgiri district by labourers for the period of 10 months from this date to 8th August 1903, by myself and together with 12 other labourers, I and the said 12 other labourers receiving in payment thereof the wages current for similar work in the Nilgiri district.

In witness, etc.

Witnesses.

C—labourer.

No. 14.—(MADRAS.)

Specimen of complaint under section 2, Act XIII of 1859.

Sheweth that petitioner advanced P maistry the sum of Rs. 140 on the 30th June 1903 to work on H estate with 40 coolies for a period of one year, but the defendant has failed to keep to his agreement, and has only 5 coolies now working for the estate. So petitioner prays for a warrant for his arrest and that he may be ordered to perform the contract.

No. 15.—(MADRAS.)

Specimen judgment in case under Act XIII of 1859 against a maistry.

The accused received an advance of Rs. 140 and had agreed in writing with the complainant to work on H estate from 20th July 1903 to 20th July 1904 with a gang of 40 coolies, and this he failed to do. He admits the contract and advance, but pleads that sickness had prevented him from fulfilling the terms of his contract. This is the ordinary excuse which he cannot substantiate. He is found guilty of wilful breach of his agreement, and is directed at the option of the complainant to work from this day till the 20th July 1904 with a gang of 40 coolies and to pay court costs, Re. 1-4-0.

—Stationary Sub-Magistrate, Coonoor.

5-10-1903.

No. 16.—(CEYLON.)

Scheme for Labour Agency on the Coast.

I. That all estates joining the Labour Agency do subscribe 10 cents per cultivated acre for not less than two years.

II. That in terms of resolution (V) Government be asked to contribute Rs. 11,000 per annum, being half of the proposed salary of European Agents.

[Resolution (5) referred to:—“That a recruiting agency be formed on the Coast, to which estates be asked to subscribe at the rate of 10 cents per cultivated acre per annum, and that Government be asked to pay half the salary of the Agent, and that the details of the scheme be left to a small Sub-Committee.”]

III. That an Agent be appointed on a salary of Rs. 12,000 per annum with two European Assistants.

IV. That the duty of the Agent will be :—(a) to establish offices at Trichinopoly, Madura, and elsewhere, as may be decided ; (b) to travel through the surrounding districts, keep diaries, collect information, forward a report every fortnight together with copy of diaries to the Committee in

Ceylon. This report to be circulated to subscribers. (e) On the application of a Kangani for money to satisfy himself as far as possible as to existence of coolies ready to go to Ceylon and to communicate with the Superintendent direct.

V. *Recommendations to subscribers.*

(a) That the subscribers should advise the Agent of all sums, say, over Rs. 250 sent to the Coast together with the name of Kangani, Village, Taluk, and as many particulars as possible.

(b) That Superintendents may remit money direct to the Agent to be handed over to the Kangani; should he (the Agent) be satisfied with his *bona fides*, no liability to be attached to the Agent for money advanced.

(c) That subscribers should keep the Agent supplied with a certain number of tin tickets.

The following is a rough estimate of the cost of the scheme.

	Rs.
European Agent's salary	12,000
European Assistants	10,000
Rent of Office	1,000
Office Assistants	750
Peons, including <i>batta</i> , travelling, etc.	3,600
Office equipment for one year, stationery	1,000
Contingencies, Printing and Sundry Postages	1,650
	<hr/>
	30,000
	<hr/>
Government contribution	11,000
	<hr/>
	19,000
	<hr/>

A. PHILIP,

Secretary to the Planters' Association of Ceylon.

N.B.—It is particularly desired that estates willing to join the scheme should notify same as early as possible, giving acreage.

No. 17.—(CEYLON.)

Specimen Tundu or preliminary Discharge Note.

LABOUR FEDERATION OF CEYLON.

TUNDU.

_____ Estate. (Date) _____ 190 .

On _____ day of _____ 19 _____ Bearer _____

_____ Kangani and _____ Coolies will be paid off from this Estate on bringing Rupees _____ (Rs. _____)

This note holds good until _____ day of _____ only, when it must be returned for renewal if necessary.

NAMES.

Adults.		Children.	
Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.

N.B.—If any Sinhalese are in the gang, the number and sex of these should be noted.

No. 18.—(CEYLON.)

Specimen Discharge Note.

No. _____

DISCHARGE NOTE.

District _____ Estate. Date _____

The undermentioned coolies have been paid off from the above Estate and their debts Rupees _____ Cents _____ (Rs. _____) recovered.

Cause of discharge:—

NAMES.

--	--	--	--

Total number in writing: _____ Superintendent.

No. 19.—(CONCLUSION.)

Specimen Agreement under section 492, Indian Penal Code.

CONTRACT UNDER SECTION 492, INDIAN PENAL CODE, BETWEEN LABOURER AND EMPLOYER.

This contract made this _____ day of _____ 190 _____ between _____ (whose description is given below and who is hereinafter called the Labourer) of the one part and _____ Manager of _____ (hereinafter called the "Employer") of the other part witnesseth that the Employer hereby agrees to convey the Labourer at the expense of the Employer to the [Name of Estate] in ^{Assam} Cachar in British India and that the Labourer hereby agrees to proceed forthwith to the said Tea Estate and there labour as a garden coolie for the Employer for _____ years of _____ working days each from the date of this Contract, and during that period unless prevented by sickness or other reasonable cause to perform such daily tasks as may be assigned to him, and the Labourer hereby further agrees that unless prevented as aforesaid he will not absent himself from work or refuse or neglect to perform such daily tasks as may be assigned to him or such other duties as he may be reasonably called upon to perform, and that any such refusal or neglect shall render him liable to the provision of Section 492 of the Indian Penal Code, and this contract further witnesseth that in consideration of the agreement on the part of the Labourer hereinbefore contained the Employer will during the continuance of this contract pay the Labourer monthly wages at the rate of _____ a month such wages being calculated and paid according to the actual number of days on which the Labourer shall work.

In witness whereof the parties have hereunto set their hands the day and year first above written.

Witness.

Signature or mark of Labourer.

Signature of Employer or his Agent.

Name.	Father's name.	Age.	Sex.	Caste.	Zillah.	Thana.	Village.	Descriptive marks.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

No. 20.—(CONCLUSION.)

Specimen Agreement under Section 492, Indian Penal Code, and Act XIII of 1859.

EIGHT-ANNA COURT-FEE STAMP.

CONTRACT BETWEEN LABOURER AND EMPLOYER.

This contract made under the provisions of section 492 of the Indian Penal Code between _____ (herein below described and hereinafter called the Labourer) of the one part and _____ (hereinafter called the Employer) on the other part, WITNESSETH, that the said Employer doth hereby agree and promise to pay for and on account of the said Labourer all ^{his} _{her} feeding, clothing and transit or other charges to _____ and to deport the said Labourer free of all cost to the Estate of the said Employer, also to pay to the said Labourer monthly wages of Rs. 4 from the date on which the said Labourer commences to labour on account of the said Employer the said wages to be calculated and paid according to the actual amount of daily work done.

And this Contract further witnesseth that in consideration of the abovementioned promises covenanted for and made by the said Employer, the said Labourer doth hereby agree and promise to proceed forthwith to, and to remain and labour on the Estate or Estates of the said Employer in any legitimate work on the Estates of the said Employer in the District of _____, and to carry out to the best of ^{his}/_{her} ability all legal orders and instructions of the said Employers for the term of THREE years from the date of this Contract, deducting always one day's leave per week, i.e., for the term of 939 full working days of 10 hours each, and any extra privilege or sick leave taken within the term of three years by the said Labourer will be worked out by the said Labourer after the expiry of the said three years.

And the said Labourer doth hereby further agree and covenant that in the event of any breach of the above Contract on ^{his}/_{her} the said Labourer's part, then the abovementioned charges of feeding, clothing and transit and other expenses incurred on ^{his}/_{her} the said Labourer's behalf, amounting to not more than Rs. 50 by the said employer, shall and will be considered as an advance or loan legally recoverable from ^{him}/_{her} the said Labourer, by the said Employer, and the said Labourer will in such case render ^{himself}/_{herself} liable under the Penal Provisions of Act XIII of 1859.

IN WITNESS whereof the said parties to this Contract have hereunto set their hands at this 27th day of January 1900.

Witness,

for Employer.

His Mark.

Witness,

Labourer.

Expired. Need not be returned.

R. K. T.

Form of Description of Labourer.

Name of Labourer.	Father's name.	Sex.	Age.	Caste.	Residence.			Sardar or recruiter.	
					District.	Thana.	Village.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Descriptive marks for identification of Labourers.

I hereby certify that this Labourer has been specially examined by me, and that ^{he}/_{she} has been declared to be physically sound and fit for labour in the Tea Gardens of _____

1900.

Civil Surgeon of _____

L

SHILLONG :—Printed and published by E. HILL, Press Superintendent, Assam, at the Secretariat Printing
Office : (Rev.) No. 20—500—4-5-1904