

From, "Report of Mr. M. J. G. -19-

Henri R. Delors on the General Conditions + Administration of the
Lesser Dependencies of the (the PART II)
Act. Inspection of Oct-Nov 1925, H.P.D., 8 Nov 1925, PL

The general conditions of the island inspected by me are, as a whole, satisfactory. The few days I spent there strengthened my original impression: settlement administered with firmness, humanity and justice. I was struck by the order prevailing: the population active and amenable, managers and employees exercising an undisputed authority.

2.- I was favourably impressed by the population of these lonely and beautiful islands. There are but few Indians, the majority being creoles, many of them born on the spot, and well-adapted to the local conditions of life, which, everything considered, is by far happier than that of their fellowmen in Mauritius. They are often treated with more than strict justice: generosity finds its way in. To their rations of rice and salt lentil or dhol are added, so that, with abundant fish and with turtle at low price their daily fare is more varied than that of labourers in Mauritius. They live on pretty good terms with each other; towards their superiors they show respect and, so long as they will be treated with justice and kindness, of which they have a precise notion and to which they appear to be very sensible, they will lead a peaceful and quiet life and give trouble to no one. It is understood, however, that the agent of the company must take every possible care not to recruit labourers of a bad or even doubtful character who will corrupt an otherwise peace-loving and honest population.

3.-

3.- The sanitary conditions are generally good. I think it my duty, however to observe that much could be done for the well being of the population by the progressive education of its members. They do not fully understand or realize the advantage of being warded at the hospital in hygienic conditions when ill or the benefit they can derive from the ingestion of medicine or drugs. For instance ankylostomiasis at Salomon could be got rid of by a tactful campaign by the manager and dispenser. The greatest care, of course, ought to be taken by the agent in Mauritius in choosing dispensers, and the attention of the latter should be particularly called to the moral and social aspects of their duty. By their tact and persuasion combined with science the sanitary conditions could be much improved (provided, of course, that the labourers engaged by the agents in Mauritius be carefully examined by the medical officer of the Company).

4.- The Civil Status registers, as I already complained of in my report, are not, as a rule, kept as they should. The main reasons for that state of things have already been ably and fully exposed by the learned magistrate Mr.L.J. Lincoln in his report dated the 29th June 1934. I endorse his views and his suggestions that a small guide-book be framed in plain language for the use of those performing the duties of Civil Status Officer in the islands. I understood that his recommendations were being given effect to, but, up to now, the aforesaid booklets have not been received by the respective managers of the settlements I visited.

5.- Though laudable efforts have already been made for the rearing of cattle in certain of the oil islands, I think that managers should be even more encouraged by their company/

company in that direction. I admired at Salomon two couples of sheep (one having been recently introduced, the other being its well-doing offspring) which goes a long way to show that cattle can be acclimatized in these places. At Diego, however, a cow and a bull, looking miserable, and according to Mr. Dumee, definitely "sterile", do not, to my point of view constitute a bar to further experiment. From instruction conversations with the learned Government veterinary surgeon Dr. F.E. Lionnet, who accompanied us on our visit, I gathered that there can be no serious reasons why this attempt should not be renewed with chances of success. Only this time instead of introducing fully grown-up cattle, two or three couples of young animals of rustic breed should be shipped.

6.- What struck me throughout my visit was the little variety in the kinds of vegetables and fruits. I found a good many bread-fruits and pumpkins, bananas, pawpaws and lemons; but am convinced that much has still to be done in that direction, so much so as the inhabitants do need fruits and vegetables to prevent the continual eating of cereals and fish from becoming detrimental to their health. It is true that the people won't eat them, or will do so but sparsely, but it behoves the manager and specially the dispenser to fight this prejudice down.

7.- Before closing my report I wish to consign here my appreciation of the courtesy of the Captain and crew of the company's ship, the kind hospitality of the managers of the settlements I visited who made all possible efforts to facilitate my work; to express to Mr. Richard Lionnet, the

agent of the company, also on inspection in the islands,
my deep thankfulness for his amiability. To them all I
have much pleasure in acknowledging my indebtedness.

8.11.35.

(sd) Henri P. Dalais
Ag. D.M. Lesser Dependencies.

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