

Emigrant Difficulties at Mandapam
or
Ceylon Quarantine Regulation Difficulties.

COMPILED

BY

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By same Author

Indian Emigrant on Ceylon Estates.

Nos. 1, 2, 3.

**TO THE MEMORY OF
DADABHAI NAOROJI.**

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N.B.—Read page 95 after page 86.

INTRODUCTION.

Half of these extracts have already been published. The first pamphlet appeared in 1915, followed by another in 1916; both were distributed among officials and non-officials.

The great disappointment over the result of the negotiations (v. p. 84) between the Madras and the Ceylon Governments has led to my reprinting them with fresh extracts. Even though I have not got together all the writings on the subject, which is obvious from the references in some of these articles, the pamphlet, unintentionally, has grown beyond bounds. That would be regrettable if it were not that the evils are many and severe.

The important grievances that have been removed are the branding of passengers and overcharging them when receiving deposits and the 50 Rs. deposit system practically, if not theoretically, the Madras Government having a little to do with the last item alone.

The following is a brief statement of the present situation :

- 1. The most pressing grievance is the **detention** of passengers at Mandapam for seven days. There is an impression that first and second class passengers are not detained if they make 'deposits'. The fact is, that, even in such cases, they are detained. This point is made clear in the letter on page 47. For sundry reasons, I am now disposed to think, contrary to my previous opinion (v. p. 27), that detention is a hardship even to coolies. Whether it is so or not, detention is futile and even obnoxious from a sanitary point of view (v. p. 40), and it is therefore unnecessary and objectionable to detain any one, for any time.*
- 2. The next in importance is the exaction that passengers should obtain 'permits' from the Chairman of the Plague Committee, Ceylon. This is not easy. A guarantee either in person (v. p. 81 & appendix C.) or in money ('deposit' has not yet been declared to be abolished, v. p. 85) has to be made. The worst of it is the passengers have to make preparations in advance to cross over a little channel between India and Ceylon. What of cases of urgency? It is a very great inconvenience for passengers to have anything to do with **Ceylon** before they reach it. There are, indeed, two alternatives for this 'permit' (v. appendix C, rule 2 c), but practically they are not as easy as they may appear. Besides obtaining the 'permit' (or an alternative) there are **two other conditions** to be fulfilled before escaping quarantine detention and being able to proceed to Ceylon (v. appendix C. rule 2).*

3. Then comes the **monopoly** enjoyed by a foreign firm, about which some writers are rightly indignant (v. pp. 59 & 66). The passengers, particularly coolies, have to be content even if the food is bad. Were there hotels managed by Indians there would be an opportunity for choice. This anomaly also will end when detention has been abolished.
4. The passengers are aggrieved at being **vaccinated** during their journey, over and over again. This matter should be carefully investigated.
5. Generally speaking, disinfection of clothes is unnecessary, and **breaking journey** for this purpose should not be tolerated.
6. The branding of passengers (v. p. 1) has given way to **stamping** with violet ink (v. p. 84). It is 'an assault in law.'
7. It is not proper that the Quarantine Medical Officers should be granted **discretionary powers**, which they exercise in a highly arbitrary manner (v. pp. 70 & 72).
8. The Ceylon Police Officer, in the boat, if he chooses, shuts the gate against Indian passengers **disembarking** at the pier of Talai Mannar (v. pp. 49 & 52), and these, in consequence, have to go back again all the way to India. This is more than a wrong. It is a veritable outrage.
9. Finally I must say that all this does not in the least affect non-Indians. The sympathetic reader will, therefore, undoubtedly arrive at the conclusion that there can be no more painful racial discrimination, than that which exists at Mandapam. If no racial distinction had been observed, the Quarantine Regulations would have been abolished long ago, for no non-Indian would have submitted to such obnoxious treatment.

If the statements made by different writers are conflicting, it is because the treatment of passengers is varied. Under the circumstances, may I be permitted to observe that my writings are, as the 'Ceylonese' says (v. p. 93), 'from personal knowledge and experience, [and] furnish a responsible statement of the condition of affairs'?

Be it remarked here that certain suggestions of some writers go to increase the difficulties, of course unconsciously, instead of minimising them. Take, for instance, the following recommendation (v. p. 73):

'If the Ceylon Government refuses to withdraw the quarantine restrictions or to impose the deposit system on all passengers alike, then the only remedy that is left for Indian leaders is to advocate retaliatory measures. They should introduce a Bill in the Legislative Council imposing similar restrictions at Talai Mannar or at Colombo on all passengers coming from Ceylon to India.'

This, if carried out, would only multiply the troubles of the Indian passengers, for the travellers from Ceylon to India are nearly all Indians.

If proper and strong representations are made, "it should not be difficult to arrive at a satisfactory solution of the difficulty, since the Ceylon Government are not likely to be so blind to their own interest as to risk their labour supply by forcing South India to take measures of reprisal" (Madras Mail, v. p. 44). If counter-action is needed, "measures against the emigration of coolies to Ceylon" would be an excellent and yet an effective course (Madras Times, v. p. 45).

Not even the Ceylon Press supports its Government, but rather cendemns it, for its ill-treatment of the travellers on their way to the island (v. pp. 8, 57, 79, 87, 91 etc.)

Now the goal aimed at is, that the present regulations should be totally abolished, and nothing more objectionable than the 'Madras Notification System' should be tolerated.

The hardships have been allowed to be in operation far too long, over three years. Who is to blame? Is it that the Leaders have failed to make due and sufficient representation to Government, of an evil that grievously affects about a lakh of persons every year? Will those who have failed do their duty now?

*Athikkadu Thekkur, }
Ramnad District, }
August 1917.*

KARUMUTTU THIAGARAJA.

From the "Ceylon Morning Leader,"

June 22nd, 1914.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

IMMIGRANT DIFFICULTIES AT MANDAPAM.

Passenger Branded and Overcharged.

Thanks to the activity and public interest of Mr. Karumuthu Thiagaraja, one of the partners of the local Chetty firm of K. R. M. T. T., two fairly serious difficulties experienced by people coming over from India have been redressed quite recently. It transpires that among other difficulties placed in the way of immigrants of all classes, they were branded, and they were overcharged.

This statement with regard to the branding, sounds almost incredible but it seems to be only too true. Mr. Thiagaraja had complaints made to him by various acquaintances of his who had come over from India, and he looked into the matter. The result was that he found that passengers of all classes were detained at Mandapam by the Ceylon Medical Authority and had a stamp branded on their chest with a viscid, adhesive and corrosive liquid made out of the juice of the "*Semicarpus anacardium*," known in Tamil as "Seng Kottai." We are told that this is a coloured latex which, when stamped on the body, burns into the skin producing a permanent white mark wherever it has corroded the skin, and also producing a disfigurement, which not only is inconvenient but is also somewhat painful for a time. Considering that most people of the Chetty class and, of course, all coolies, are usually bare-bodied, a stamp on their chest of this lasting description is naturally very highly resented. The brand seems to have been inflicted by way of helping identification. When Mr. Thiagaraja satisfied himself that this statement was true, he at once approached the Hon. Mr. Ramanathan who promised to intervene and was sympathetic, listening carefully to Mr. Thiagaraja's grievance and himself examining marks on two or three passengers whom Mr. Thiagaraja had taken up with him. But it is naturally difficult for Mr. Ramanathan, however anxious he may be, to set matters of this kind right at once. Shortly afterwards Mr. Thiagaraja reported the matter to Mr. C. Suntheram, the Chief Appraiser of the Customs, who has the confidence of the Hon. Mr. F. Bowes, Principal Collector of Customs and

head of the Ceylon Plague Committee, under whose instructions the medical authorities at the various Indian cooly ports carry out their work. Subsequently Mr. Thiagaraja had an interview with Mr. Bowes, himself, who very kindly listened to the complaint and also satisfied himself of its accuracy from personal observation of the brand marks on the chest of four passengers whom Mr. Thiagaraja produced before him.

Mr. Bowes took so serious a view of the matter that he promised Mr. Thiagaraja on the spot that the practice would be discontinued from that very day. Presumably, he sent out instructions to the medical authorities at Mandapam to that effect, and Mr. Thiagaraja's observation of persons who have come through subsequently, has satisfied him that no more passengers are now branded in this way.

It seems extraordinary that such a thing should be done with the apparent authority of the Government. When Sir Ridgeway, in 1903, paid a visit to Tataparai Cooly Camp at Tuticorin, he enquired into all the details of the precautions observed by the Ceylon Medical Authorities there, and when he was told that third class passengers had the Medical Officer's rubber stamp affixed to their wrists in violet ink for the purpose of identification by the local Immigrant Officer, on arrival in Colombo, Sir West smiled and asked the Medical Officer,

"But is not that an assault in law?"

"Technically, it is, sir, but—" said the Medical Officer with a smile!

Sir West Ridgeway nodded, and said that the thing might go on until somebody objected.

Nobody did object, because the violet ink was readily washable and it was only used on third class passengers who made no complaint. But to carry the same practice to the extreme of branding people with a viscid and corrosive liquid which leaves permanent marks and gives pain, seems to be a high-handed development, and it would be interesting to know how it originated.

Mr. Thiagaraja also found out that people coming from Mandapam were required by the local agents of the Madura Company, Ltd., to deposit the sum of Rs. 52.62½ each, whereas they were handed a receipt for Rs. 50 only, a charge of Re. 1 being supposed to be for "stamp and duty." The additional sum of Rs. 1.62½ was not accounted for. Mr. Thiagaraja at once wrote to the Colombo agents of the Madura Company asking for an explanation. They desired particulars. On the 8th instant, Mr. Thiagaraja sent up a list of five names with the numbers of their respective receipts. He was then told by the Madura Company that they had

written to their Paumban agents making inquiries and that they would let him know the result on hearing from Paumban. Mr. Thiagaraja left on Thursday for his home in India, in Ramnad, and had not, till 4 o'clock that day heard any explanation, from the Madura Company of this overcharge, but from enquiries made by him from passengers coming through he learnt on Thursday, that from the 9th instant the Paumban people were charging only Rs. 51.25. Evidently the charge above this sum was unauthorised, though why the money was collected, and what became of it is not yet clear. It would be interesting if the Madura Co., would kindly favour the public with some explanation on this point.

We cannot speak too highly of Mr. Thiagaraja's interest in this matter and of the very methodical and systematic way in which he took up each grievance. In each case he ascertained the fullest particulars, made certain of the names, produced some of the passengers before Mr. Bowes in the former case, and was able to give precise reference to names and receipt numbers in the latter case, thus showing that he understands how to expose a genuine grievance and secure its prompt redress. It is a pleasure to bear testimony to Mr. Thiagaraja's public spirit in this matter for in neither instance of his intervention had he any personal motive for taking up the grievance. It is evident that things are done at Mandapam and other cooly ports which require the careful attention of the authorities. Little grievance from which the humble poor suffer are very difficult to detect, because the bewildered cooly has no idea of exactly how much he must submit to and what exactions are inflicted on him above and beyond those which are inevitable. The whole community owes a large measure of thanks to Mr. Thiagaraja. It is a promising augury that a member of the Nattukkottai Chetty community should be so public spirited and show his interest in these things so effectively and yet so unobtrusively.

From the "Commenweal."

July 31st, 1914.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The Ceylon Morning Leader has brought to light a serious scandal, now happily ended, in connection with the immigration of coolies into Ceylon. It is stated that until very recently, passengers to that crown colony were being branded at Mandapam and a rupee was being extorted from each, for no reason whatever. Both the practices are now discontinued. But nothing is known of their origin or how they emanated. The following paragraph will reveal the revolting nature of the treatment meted out to the coolies :

"Passengers of all classes were detained at Mandapam by the Ceylon Medical Authority and had a stamp branded on their chest with a viscid, adhesive and crossive liquid made out of the juice of the "*Semicaspus anacardium*," known in Tamil as "Seng Kottai." We are told that this is a coloured latex which, when stamped on the body, burns into the skin producing a permanent white mark wherever it has corroded the skin, and also producing a disfigurement, which not only is inconvenient but is also somewhat painful for a time. Considering that most people of the chetty class and, of course, all coolies are usually bare-bodied, a stamp on their chest of this lasting description is naturally very highly resented."

From the "Ceylon Morning Leader,"

June 25th 1914.

CORRESPONDENCE.

IMMIGRANT DIFFICULTIES AT MANDAPAM

SIR,—I am heartily glad to find, from what appears in your valuable paper of the 22nd instant, under the title "Immigrant difficulties at Mandapam," that some of the extraordinary things that have been going on at Mandapam have at last been brought to light.

But what strikes me as something inexplicable is the consistent attitude of absolute indifference maintained by both the Chairman of the Plague Committee and the Government when representations were made to them in writing through memorial after memorial from persons who had been the victims at Mandapam.

Only two serious irregularities are mentioned by you. I have mentioned several others in my letter—copy of which I enclose—to the Colonial Secretary which I forwarded on the 10th instant.

I had not heard of the branding, though I have seen and spoken to a good number of men who returned from India during the last two or three months. This mode of criminal assault was, I suppose, reserved for those who appeared to be the most voiceless and helpless.

As for the unauthorised exactions, it is not the Madura Company's Agent alone who is guilty, but also the men in the Post Office at Paumban, for some passengers paid the money to the agent, and others remitted the money through the post at Paumban to the Chairman of the Plague Committee at Colombo. At each place the sums demanded varied from Rs. 52 to Rs. 54. In all cases the receipts given were only for Rs. 50, which was the security demanded by Government for the due fulfilment by every passenger of the duty of reporting himself or herself to a Government Medical Officer for the prescribed number of days.

Once these deposits are paid, there is apparently the greatest reluctance on the part of the responsible man at the office of the Chairman of the Plague Committee to return them to the parties who paid them. I mentioned one specific case in my letter to the Colonial Secretary, where the money had not been returned after one month and twenty days. I do not know if that money has since been paid. Here's another: one Murugan Suppayah of Mathagal West, Jaffna, paid Rs. 250 for himself and party on the 31st March last, after 13 days' detention at the Plague Camp. The reporting period expired on April 10. He wired to the Chairman for the money on the 20th May. The reply was, "Send number and date of receipt." He sent the particulars on the 22nd of May; up to the 17th of June, he had not received the money. I do not know if the man has since received it.

From all the facts it is clear that every communication addressed to the Chairman of the Plague Committee is disposed of by some one in his office without any reference to the Chairman himself. It is to be presumed that the Chairman is paid for whatever duties he performs or is supposed to perform as Chairman. If so, what is his justification for receiving the pay and making over the duties to an underling?

The Colonial Secretary's reply to my letter is the following, dated the 15th instant: "Sir,...I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant on the above subject". The subject is stated as "Quarantine Regulations at Mandapam." There is no promise of an

inquiry or of a further communication. From which shall I be justified in concluding that in the Colonial Secretary's Office also there is a little man in authority who arrogates to himself all the functions proper to the Chief? Can such a thing be? On the answer to this question hangs the weal or woe of Ceylon.

Jaffna

June 24th, 1914.

Yours truly,

J. M. HENSMAN.

From the "Ceylon Morning Leader,"

June 25th, 1914.

EDITORIAL.

IMMIGRANT DIFFICULTIES AT MANDAPAM.

It is a pleasure to find that our reference to the public-spirited work of Mr. K. Thiagaraja has induced others, who have information on the point, to come forward with duly authenticated facts, regarding the unnecessary hardships imposed upon immigrants coming into Ceylon from India by the new over-land route. We cannot doubt that His Excellency the Governor will be grateful to men who, like Mr. HENSMAN, at least give him an opportunity for learning what is thought and felt about the arrangements at Mandapam by those affected. It is quite certain, from the great interest which His Excellency personally took in the opening of the Mannar line and the sanguine hopes he expressed at Danushkody, that the Governor would be the last man to approve of unnecessary or harsh restrictions against the freedom of passengers using this new route. We are so shocked by the disclosures contained in Mr. HENSMAN'S letter to the Colonial Secretary that we can only hope that, on some points at least, he has been misinformed. We know that it is unlikely that so experienced and responsible a man would commit himself on paper to statements which he had not duly verified; but, in spite of this, the evils complained of are so serious and disclose the officials in a light so little to their credit, that we must cling to the hope that there is some mistake. But, whether there is a mistake in Mr. HENSMAN'S information or not, there is quite enough in it for the Government to institute a prompt and searching inquiry. Mr. HENSMAN'S letter to the Colonial Secretary is dated the 10th instant. The

circumstance that the Hon. Mr. BOWES personally visited Mandapam since then, and inspected the Camp, will satisfy Mr. HENSMAN that the Government has not been quite so indifferent to his complaint as he believes, though why he was not informed, in the usual course, that his statement would be considered and that a "further communication" would be made to him, we cannot understand. It is not as though Mr. HENSMAN were a man of straw, unknown, insignificant and unworthy of attention. Even the new administration has been long enough in operation to have realised that no man enjoys a wider measure of respect, or is regarded with greater esteem in the North than Mr. HENSMAN. Though we are persuaded that the Government meant no discourtesy, the manner in which his letters have been treated would almost suggest a suspicion of studied indifference. That is not the most prudent way of conciliating the public, or of winning public confidence. A brief promise that the letter would receive attention would have cost nothing and committed the Government in no way. With a Governor who is the pattern of courtliness and courtesy, the Administration might now turn over a new leaf and adopt methods somewhat less brusque than those favoured by the last Government.

On the subject of the complaint, we confess we find the whole disclosure incomprehensible. Mr. THIAGARAJA found Mr. BOWES most courteous and keenly anxious to do all he could to rectify abuses. He had the branding of passengers instantly stopped and thus showed that, when a complaint reaches him and satisfies his mind that it is genuine, he does not hesitate to take swift action. Quite irreconcilable with this is MR. HENSMAN'S statement that passengers claiming the return of their deposits fail even to receive replies to their letters and are kept waiting inordinately before their requests receive attention. Had MR. HENSMAN'S complaint stood alone, we should have been disposed to imagine that he was misinformed. But for sometime past, we have noticed a stream of letters in one evening paper making precisely this allegation, of unconscionable delays over correspondence with the Chairman of the Plague Committee. It is impossible to hold Mr. BOWES personally and solely responsible for these lapses, though some measure of the responsibility must be visited upon him. But Mr. BOWES has too many irons in the fire and is probably one of the hardest-worked of the senior officials. He is Principal Collector of Customs, a Member of the Legislative Council, the Chairman of the Plague Committee (in respect of the work done for which he receives a special fee or allowance of Rs. 2,000 a year), a Director of the Savings Bank, a Director of the Widows and Orphans Fund, a Manager of the Public Service Guarantee Association, Registrar of Shipping and Seamen, Receiver of Wrecks,

Chairman of the Port Commission, and Heaven knows how many other things. In respect of each of these posts, he is in theory liable to be visited with the whole blame. But, in practice, we must admit the difference between the official and the man. There is no doubt that the correspondence of the public with the Plague Committee is subject to inordinate delays; that is a point worthy of Mr. Bowes notice. But the serious complaints arise, in the present instance, not so much out of the delays, but out of the apparent malpractices and thoughtless hardships, callously inflicted upon the bewildered immigrants. One can well imagine how utterly perplexed and annoyed would be a family man arriving at Mandapam on his way from India, when confronted with the multitude of confusing regulations and specially by the requisition for a deposit of Rs. 50 in respect of each member of his family. It is not necessary to confine our imagination to the poor alone, in such a case. How many fairly well-to-do men, travelling with their wife and a family of five with them, would be equal to the unexpected demand of Rs. 50 in respect of each, or Rs 350 altogether, specially when they knew they had a good deal of their travelling still before them? The regulations enforced are in themselves atrocious, and they appear to be carried out in a manner scarcely humane. We much regret we cannot find room for Mr. HENSMAN'S letter to the Colonial Secretary to-day, but the extracts of it which we propose to reproduce, will communicate to our readers a shock no less unpleasant than that under the influence of which we write. Is it not perverse that the Island should, on one hand, make exceptional exertions to attract a passenger traffic, and, on the other, take a kind of cynical pleasure in devising the most preposterous regulations, to harass and bewilder the innocents whom it contrives to entice into its web? Is not the day of foolish, perverse and unreasonable restrictions past, yet? Is there any sense, in this enlightened age, in trying to frustrate the facilities which nature has herself provided for free intercourse between South India and North Ceylon? The sooner a saner and more sympathetic spirit is infused into the immigration and quarantine regulations of Ceylon, the better for the Island and its interests both at home and abroad.

From the "Ceylon Morning Leader,"

June 26th, 1914

OUR RECENT COMPLAINTS.

TREATMENT OF IMMIGRANTS AT MANDAPAM.

An Explanation by Mr. Bowes.

A Press representative interviewed the Chairman of the Plague Committee, the Hon. Mr. F. Bowes yesterday with reference to the complaints which have been made by correspondents to this and other papers as to the delay in the return of deposits made by passengers to Ceylon from India at Mandapam.

The complaints are that deposits have been made and that considerable delay has occurred before the money has been returned, that unauthorised exactions have been levied at Mandapam, and that letters to the Plague Committee have remained unanswered for lengthy periods. Other complaints have been made that passengers at Mandapam have been branded by the Medical Authorities, that the arrangements for providing passengers with water on the journey are unsatisfactory and that the lavatory accommodation for third class passengers is bad.

Questioned first as to the non-return of deposits, Mr. Bowes said: "That was due to two causes. Firstly, just when the new route was started small-pox in Southern India increased to a large extent." He drew attention to a map which showed villages in which small-pox, plague and cholera had occurred, and pointed out that any one approaching Mandapam Camp had to pass through small-pox districts. "Being anxious to prevent the introduction of disease by the new route," he said, "the Medical Officer was necessarily strict in requiring persons who had been liable to infection from small-pox to undertake to submit to surveillance. The arrangements made on the Indian side by the Madura Co., for receiving money deposits had not been perfected, and it appears that, though at Tuticorin where they received such deposits there had never been any trouble, when their Agent at Mandapam undertook it it is alleged that excessive amounts were recovered. No direct complaint was made to me, but through the Madura Company here steps were taken to prevent the possibility of the recurrence of such exactions.

"The second reason was that, at the same time, the Chief Clerk of the Plague Committee fell ill and had to go on leave, and the work of

dealing with the refund of deposits was unfortunately allowed to fall into arrears and into some confusion by the clerk in charge. As soon as this was realised steps were taken to remedy the matter and an increase of staff was obtained. All arrears of correspondence were cleared off and all deposits returned about a week ago."

Mr. Bowes was next referred to the complaints as to the branding of passengers.

"It has been customary at Tuticorin," he said, "to mark coolies who have passed through the Tatarparai Camp so as to prevent unauthorised persons joining the gangs. In adopting this procedure at Mandapam during the first days, apparently some corrosive mixture was used by the Medical Officer, but this was immediately stopped as soon as the error was discovered."

Questioned concerning the arrangements which now existed for supplying coolies with water on the journey, Mr. Bowes said: "Arrangements have now been made to give water at stations along the line, and I have recently heard of no complaints on this score."

Next, as to lavatory accommodation, Mr. Bowes stated: "The trains are specially constructed for the coolies and possess lavatory accommodation, but sometimes it has been found necessary to put on other carriages which were deficient in lavatory accommodation. The matter has been brought to the notice of the General Manager of the Railway and he assures me that this, as far as possible, will be avoided."

"Is there any prospect of an early abolition of the deposit system?" Mr. Bowes was next asked.

"The whole question is under consideration and has been for a considerable time," came the reply, "but in view of the prevalence of small-pox in Southern India the Medical Authorities are very loath to consent to any relaxation. The Sub-Committee of the Plague Committee however, is looking into the whole matter."

Asked what he saw on the occasion of his recent visit to Mandapam, Mr. Bowes said the state of affairs prevailing at the Camp was satisfactory considering the difficulties the officers in charge had to contend with and that those difficulties were very real. "Dr. McGahey, who accompanied me on a previous occasion," said Mr. Bowes, "was quite satisfied as to the condition of the camp. Now that Mr. Thornhill has taken charge and is starting the conversion of the temporary camp into a permanent one, the conditions to which passengers at the camp

will be subjected will be gradually improved. It is proposed to erect rest-houses suited to different classes of the community, so that no persons whom the Medical Officer may think it advisable to detain in quarantine need be subjected to any unnecessary discomfort. There are certain difficulties with regard to the acquisition of land required for these purposes, but I trust that by the end of the year a large proportion of the necessary buildings will be completed. As regards coolies the present cadjan accommodation is quite comfortable."

"Unfortunately," said Mr. Bowes, "passengers who are considered liable to infection and who have to submit to quarantine at Mandapam will have to suffer for some time a certain amount of inconvenience. It was not realised when the original scheme was drawn up some years ago, how quickly traffic would develop by this new route and the temporary camp was only adapted to accommodate 1,200 persons. It now has to deal with 2,000 to 3,000 and a certain proportion of the estate coolies have to be sent round *via* Tuticorin and Ragama to prevent overcrowding in spite of the many additional temporary buildings which have been lately erected."

From the "Ceylon Morning Leader,"

July 3rd, 1914.

CORRESPONDENCE.

IMMIGRANT DIFFICULTIES AT MANDAPAM.

Sir,—I am sorry Mr. Bowes attempts an explanation. There is no explanation possible or rather admissible except this, that for years the Chairman of the Plague Committee did nothing but take the chair at meetings of the Committee. The executive part of this office was to all intents and purposes left entirely or almost entirely in the hands of his Chief Clerks, and we know from numerous examples to what lengths Chief Clerks can go when once they feel sure they have won the absolute confidence of their Chiefs and are free to do what they please. This conclusion is the less injurious alternative, since the only other alternative is that the Chairman of the Plague Committee deliberately made it his unalterable rule not to give heed to complaints against his subordinates. To suppose this would be to do violence to our conception of a cultured British Officer who must be taken to be a type of the Imperial race who rule all over the earth by sympathy and justice. The

only likely explanation therefore is that the Chairman did not know, or was never allowed to know, what was actually being done in the enforcement of the plague regulations.

He has now been told by his Chief clerk that there were no abuses of any kind at Tuticorin,—“at Tuticorin where they received such deposits there had never been any trouble” are his words—, and he evidently believes it. He has been told that there was not sufficient time for the arrangements at Mandapam to “be perfected,” and that was the source of all the trouble, and he believes it. The fact is the doings at Mandapam are merely repetitions on a large scale (owing to the larger influx of passengers) of what had been going on for years at Tuticorin. I can prove it. Here is one instance. Last year, one Mr. C., in his efforts to get back his deposit, was down from pillar to post for about 3 months, that is to say, when he wrote to Colombo, he was referred to the man at Tuticorin. This man referred him back to Colombo, and the Colombo authorities referred him once again to Tuticorin, and so on,—a game which evidently gave immense amusement to the clerks at Colombo. All this took place last year when the famous and original Deposit System, invented and patented in Ceylon, had been at work at Tuticorin for about three years! Surely *three years* was sufficient time even for Colombo clerks “to perfect” a system?

I have heard it said that a Member of the Madras Legislative Council, a Brahmin Lawyer of great eminence, was the victim of something like the same game about two or three years ago, and that that gentleman put a question in the Madras Legislative Council, with the result that correspondence ensued between the Madras and Ceylon Governments. The story goes—I can hardly believe it—that the Ceylon Government *denied* the very existence of the Deposit System. If this were true,—which I for one cannot believe—it would only show, in a clearer light than anything else can, the omnipotence of the clerks at Colombo.

As for Mr. Bowes's second reason that the Chief Clerk was ill, and that “the work of dealing with the refund of deposits was allowed to fall into arrears and into *some* (?) confusion,” it is passing strange that the Head Clerk's illness of probably two or three weeks should produce “some confusion” for years before, and for several months after his illness. This plea only confirms the supposition that every complaint against the Clerks was disposed of by the Clerks themselves.

I see that Mr. Bowes was asked by your representative: “if there was any prospect of an early abolition of the deposit system.”—His reply was that “the Medical Authorities are very loth to consent to any

relaxation." But let me ask what have Medical Authorities to do with it? It is a purely *administrative* question with which medical science has nothing to do. But, merely in outline, all that is necessary is a statement to triplicate in a printed form by every passenger at Mandapam, giving his name, father's name, his village, division and province, his occupation, age, and so on,—one copy to be sent to the Chairman of the Plague Committee, another to the Provincial Surgeon, and the third to the Chief headman of the division in which the passenger's village is situated. Then the only question is, is the machinery of Government competent or not competent to discover and prosecute every Indian immigrant who fails to report himself duly to a Government Medical Officer?

In Madras, the simple Passport system, unassisted by the system of deposits, has not failed, though of course even under it the public have suffered untold hardships. The system has worked for 17 or 18 years, and now the Madras Government has abolished it, and substituted what is called the "Notification System," under which arrivals from infected areas are at last freed from the duty of reporting themselves to a Medical Officer for a stated number of days. "In fact even the mere Passport system has been found to be an altogether unnecessary interference with the liberty of the subject."

The necessity is now urgent that the harassed and plundered travellers from India to Ceylon should be left in peace. The tale of woe has been incessant and, in not a few cases, even harrowing during the last 17 or 18 years. But human endurance has its limits. The Government may rest assured that the trodden worm will turn at last.

In your sympathetic and outspoken leading article of the 25th instant, you say, as regards the facts I gave in my letter to the Colonial Secretary, "that on some points at least" I must have "been misinformed." Let me say that I stand by every statement I made in that letter. I suppressed many other damning facts, as they were difficult to prove. Here, however, is one that can be proved. One Nagamuttu, a native of Copay, Jaffna, came from Madras about a month or two ago. Arriving at Madura, he was told of the deposit of Rs. 50, without which he could not proceed to Jaffna. He is a cooly in Madras and could not dream of finding the money himself. He, therefore, went about among the few Jaffnese resident at Madura to raise a loan of Rs. 50. One of them informed him that it was well-known that 2 or 3 rupees properly applied at the right quarter at Mandapam would enable him to go to Jaffna without the payment of any deposit and "without the necessity of even reporting himself to a Medical Officer at Jaffna." He duly followed the

advice. He came to Jaffna without any detention at Mandapam. He spent about 20 days in Jaffna, and is now back again in Madras. I leave your readers to draw their own inferences. One thing is clear. He must have had a pass signed by the medical Officer at Mandapam or purporting to be signed by him. And a copy of this pass was *not* sent to the Provincial Surgeon at Jaffna.

These and things like these are the *necessary* results of attempting to enforce oppressive regulations. Honest people are subjected to all kinds of indignities, detentions, starvations and privations. Dishonest people evade the rules. Or rather those who find it impossible to comply with the regulations must and will evade them. And each man who successfully evades the regulations is an undetected and *undetectable* source of infection. Remove the motive for evasion, there will be no evasion, and no danger of the infection of a whole village or town or province. Surely this is simple enough to be comprehended even by the meanest understanding.

I have asked the Colonial Secretary if the Ceylon Government would be pleased to abolish at once both the passport and deposit systems and adopt the Madras Notification System. Let me hope that it will yet see the justice and reasonableness of my humble prayer on behalf of the people of South India and Jaffna.

Jaffna, }
June 30th, 1914. }

Yours truly,

J. M. HENSMAN.

From the "Ceylon Morning Leader,"

July 3rd, 1914.

EDITORIAL

IMMIGRANT DIFFICULTIES.

Mr. Hensman returns to the charge to-day, and has some very startling things to disclose about the methods adopted at the Indian immigrant stations. Some of the statements he made in his previous letter found us unprepared to believe that such things could possibly be true, and while not criticising Mr. Hensman's methods of investigation, we fell back upon what seemed to be the safer position that the stories carried to him might be untrue. But realising quite clearly the gravity of his statements, MR. HENSMAN to-day deliberately declares that he stands by what he said, and we can only bow our acquiescence in his disclosures. One story that he tells seems very difficult to believe. He declares that a certain man, coming from India, was warned of the deposit demanded, and set about collecting the money. Some one then suggested to him that a bribe administered in the proper quarter would remove all difficulties. The man is said to have employed the bribe, with the result that he passed all the challenges and avoided all the inconveniences, upon the rigid maintenance of which our entire safety is supposed to depend. MR. HENSMAN is sure that this is an "instance that can be proved." It is the clear obligation of the Government, thus plainly challenged, to give MR. HENSMAN the opportunity to prove it. We feel sure that the Ceylon Government cannot possibly desire such malpractices to continue and it ought to avail itself of an opportunity so promising for instituting a strict and searching inquiry. One severe example made among the culprits will relieve hundreds of innocent victims of many hardships and deliver them from untold exactions. We cannot imagine why the Ceylon Government clings to the deposit system, if the experience of the Madras Government spread over a much larger area and a longer period, has satisfied that Administration that the system is neither effectual nor free from mischievous consequences. We are at all times only too happy to afford men of MR. HENSMAN's standing and sense of responsibility every opportunity to present statements like these to the public, and while we can ourselves form no opinion on some of the graver charges he makes, we are glad to let him state his opinions and conclusions, with the object of enabling the authorities to learn the truth and to begin their own investigations. If the Government declines the task, we can only hope that MR. RAMANATHAN will take the matter up. The Legislative Council resumes its sittings on the 15th instant and it is worth striking the iron while it is

hot. Fortunately, MR. BOWES has a seat in the Council and can elucidate the situation.

We are, however, disposed to believe that there are irregularities and inconsistencies in the conduct of the Plague Committee. Only on Wednesday, our attention was drawn to one absurdity, while a letter published yesterday told a similar story. We refer to the statement, published elsewhere, of O. M. ABDUL CADER. He is a jeweller, whose occupation is to sell his stock on board ships. For the right to enter these ships, he takes out a license from the Shipping Company's local Agency, paying sums between Rs. 30 and Rs. 50 a quarter. He is a petty trader and much of his stock is raised by borrowed capital. Since the end of February last, he has been thrown out of his occupation by the refusal of the Plague Authorities to permit him to go on board. He is a man of good character, for the Shipping Companies never issue a license without satisfying themselves of the licensee's character. He is, therefore, not a disreputable person. Since the appearance of plague in Colombo, the Plague Committee have restricted the right of boarding ships in harbour. Obviously, the intention is to preclude any means of communicating infection to people on the ship. But how is that intention carried out? Coolies from the wharf and the coal sheds are freely admitted on board; so are stevedores, and dubashes, men, tailors, tea-sellers, dhobies, while news-paper sellers, jewellers and some others are not permitted. Steerage passengers are allowed to land and they wander through the Pettah, visiting the specially infected areas. They may carry the infection, but the Plague-Committee is indifferent to that. What exactly the line of discrimination is, it is impossible to say. It seems to be arbitrary and absurd. And, may we add, it is dangerous. Some of those who have complained to us suggest that they were told by some one that, if they approached the right persons with the right kind of present, they could get the permission. This is probably a loose, idle tale. But it is current, and that is the danger. There is a worse absurdity to be disclosed. ABDUL CADER is forbidden to go on board with his stock-in-trade. But when he represents that he has money to recover from persons on board, to whom he has previously sold jewellery on credit, he is allowed to enter without hindrance, provided he goes without his stock-in-trade. The theory seems, therefore, that the admission of the man with his jewellery box may carry infection, but the admission of the man without the box will carry none. Yet we know that "dry goods," jewels, do not carry infection. The danger apparently lies in the man's box, nevertheless. Are not these methods absurd? And must they not suggest to the ignorant and illiterate that they may be intended to pave the way for unlawful exactions? It seems time that things were done a little more rationally.

From the "Ceylon Morning Leader,"

July 7th, 1914.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Plague Precautions :—The Hon. Mr. Bowes gave us much hope when he declared that the whole subject of the deposit system was under re-consideration. It is earnestly to be hoped that the Ceylon Government will profit by the experience of Madras, and study the provisions of the new Orders, published in recent issues of the Fort of St. George Gazette. The Passport system has been abandoned in Madras and what is called the Notification system has been introduced in its place. In this connection, we wonder whether the authorities are aware that some of their precautions are really evaded? We have personal recollection of a passage from Tuticorin to Colombo not very long ago, when we found that servants and third class passengers were required to repair to an establishment, where their persons were to be disinfected and their clothes fumigated. We found the payment of a very small sum of money dispensed with any discomfort or disturbance, the person paying being taken into the building, indeed, but left entirely unmolested, while crowds of coolies were made to change their clothes, and submit to some sort of disinfection, and their clothes were thrust into a heat chamber and brought up to a certain high temperature. But of what avail are these precautions if they are not enforced in every case? We know of several passengers thus exempted. Now we are told that something similar happens in Colombo at the Fumigation Camp, those who pay Re. 1 escaping any trouble, while only those who decline to make the payment, or are unable to do so, are first delayed inordinately, and then subjected to the full rigours of disinfection and fumigation or whatever else there is to be got through. We are told that things are slightly better since the plague arrived in Colombo, but that even now somebody exacts a levy of a rupee or so from such passengers as seem likely to pay without over-much demur. These things require looking into, and we have no doubt Mr. Bowes will see that these allegations are carefully inquired into. We believe we should be able to give specific instances, if desired to do so, for our informant professes to have ample information.

From the "Ceylon Morning Leader,"

July 11th, 1914.

EDITORIAL.

IMMIGRANT DIFFICULTIES AT TUTICORIN

The visit of the Hon. Mr. F. Bowes, Chairman of the Plague Committee, and the Hon. Sir Allan Perry, P.C.M.O., to Mandapam resulted, as they declared to the Press, in their finding everything satisfactory. We should be glad to hear from passengers passing through that route what their opinion on the subject is. The visit of these two Officials was manifestly undertaken in view of the complaints in the Press and must have led to good results. But yesterday, we had information which suggests that there is room for improvement in the system at Tuticorin. This port has fallen off considerably as an Immigrant Station, but a good many of the best known Parawa Merchants of Colombo, in whose hands is concentrated so much of the retail trade of the Island, have still to patronise the Tuticorin route, for that port is either their home or the nearest seaport to their native district. The prompt measures adopted, by the Hon. Mr. Bowes, on hearing Mr. K. THIAGARAJA'S complaint, appear to have resulted in some good at Tuticorin, too, specially in the matter of the charges levied. But there is still much room for correction. Here are a few instances deserving attention. On Thursday, Mr. ALEXIS C. FERNANDES came through Tuticorin, having left that port on the previous day. He was there required to pay a sum of Rs. 51.25, Rs. 50 being the deposit, Re. 1 being said to be fee for a stamp, though no stamp is now affixed on any document, so far as the passengers know, and they look on this charge with suspicion. But of the sum of 25 cents, there is no explanation whatever. Nobody can find out why it is levied. Yesterday, Mr. JOSEPH PALDANO arrived from Tuticorin. He had to pay Rs. 52, Rs. 50 being the deposit, Re. 1 for that stamp again, and Re. 1 not explained by any one, nor recoverable. It seems that there is now a new form employed, no longer provided by the Madura Company, but being a document supplied by the Ceylon Government, and representing a sort of bond between the passenger and the Ceylon Medical Officer at Tuticorin. Now come some instances which require the attention of the Government. They are suspicious to the minds of the passengers. On June 25th last, two brothers of Mr. F. H. Pereira, head of the Firm of Messrs. F. X. Pereira and Sons, named Messrs. R. G. Pereira and J. L. Pereira, came over from Tuticorin. They

went to the Medical Officer to get the usual certificates, without which the Shipping Company issues no tickets of passage. They desired to travel by the second class, for with a run of only 16 hours' duration, even well-to-do merchants do not care to waste money unnecessarily, specially as the accommodation in the second class is usually quite satisfactory. On arriving at the Doctor's Office, however, the young men were told by the Medical Officer that he would not give them the certificate unless they took first class tickets. Two months ago, *Mr. Simon Paiva* came over and he had the same experience, he too being required by the Medical Officer to take a first class ticket, instead of coming, as he preferred, by the second class. These people cannot understand the Medical Officer's interest in getting them to pay Rs. 21 for a first class passage, when they can come over for Rs. 10-50 which is the second class fare. Some of the passengers have quaint notions, naturally. They think that, since the over-land route has resulted in a falling off of traffic through Tuticorin, the Shipping Company is anxious to get as much money as it can out of the passengers who still patronise the old route, and that this is why the Medical Officer insists on passengers travelling by the first class instead of the second. It is obvious that this could not possibly be the true explanation, and the point needs no discussion. Still, the Medical Officer's action in inducing people to travel by the higher class naturally leads to surmises, specially when no reason is given. We cannot imagine what the reason is, either, but if there is a reason, it had better be given plainly to the passengers. The Medical Officer is said to insist even upon servants who attend higher class passengers travelling by the second class. A fortnight before Easter, some five girls, including the children of Mr. and Mrs. M. G. Gomes of Negombo, came over by this route from their Convent at Trevandrum, where they are schooling. They had three or four attendants with them. The Medical Officer insisted upon the girls as well as their attendants travelling by the second class, each paying the second class fare. On arrival at Tuticorin, they had each of them, in addition, to deposit Rs. 52—altogether a sum of Rs. 400 or Rs. 450! Was it quite necessary that each of them should pay down this deposit? We are glad to learn that the system of stamping people's chest with a corrosive liquid has been given up. Passengers are now stamped with a violet ink stamp. But, in addition, they have to register their thumb marks and finger prints. The system of requiring finger prints has just begun. In the case of reputable and well-known persons, this regulation is regarded as unduly harsh. The Ceylon Government knows very well how deeply the Indians in the Transvaal resented the regulations requiring finger prints. The prejudice against this form of identification is inexplicable

to Europeans, but vividly intelligible to the Eastern mind. It is, to the Eastern mind, a form of humiliation and wanton degradation. Merchants and respectable people resent it very deeply. As the system has just been introduced, complaints have not yet perhaps reached the Government. But, considering the experience in the Transvaal, the Ceylon Government can require no pressure from us to satisfy them that it is an unfortunate idea, and one much better abandoned at once. We have no doubt these facts will be appreciated by the Plague Authorities and lead to some results, for we know how keenly anxious the Hon. Mr. Bowes is to save the passengers any evitable inconvenience. The insistence upon the first class in the case of passengers desiring to travel by the second, the levying of Rs. 52 and Rs. 51.25 or of any sum in excess of the actual deposit, and the introduction of the finger-print identification—a measure associated in the East with criminals—are matters on which we hope he will bestow his earliest attention.

From the "Ceylon Morning Leader,"

July 14th, 1914.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE HARDSHIPS OF IMMIGRANTS.

Sir,—I wrote in my letter which appeared in your issue of the 25th June that one Murugan Suppayyah paid as deposit for himself and party Rs. 250 on the 31st March last. He sent a wire to the Chairman for the return of the money on the 20th May. The next day he was asked by wire to send number and date of receipt, which he sent on the 22nd May.

On the 30th June, he, at last, received a memo asking him "to furnish the Chairman with a stamped receipt for the amount, with the endorsement of the Medical Officer, to whom he and party reported themselves." Thus it took one month and nine days for the Chairman, that is from the 22nd May to the 30th June, to send this condition as a preliminary to the repayment of the Rs. 250 which had remained with him for three months.

Further, a stamped receipt is, at least, intelligible, though the question naturally occurs, who will repay the man Suppayyah the cost of the telegram from Mandapam to Jaffna asking a relative to send him the

money by telegraphic money order, the commission for the telegraphic money order, the cost of the further telegram from Mandapam inquiring from his relative when the money would be sent (the Postmaster at Mandapam having unlawfully withheld the money for five days !), the cost of the telegram in reply, the cart hire to the Medical Officer's station, ten miles away, on six or seven different occasions, the interest of the money (RS. 250) for three months, and so on ?

But why does the Chairman want the endorsement of the Medical Officer now? That officer's certificate was duly forwarded to the Chairman some time in April last, along with the man's letter requesting the return of the deposit. I dwell in detail on this man's case only as being typical of hundreds of other persecutions.

The rule, I now hear, is that passengers (probably only third class) will not be called upon to pay deposits if they consent to remain in the Plague Camp seven days. But why seven days? Why any number of days at all ?

Is there none in the Plague Committee great-souled enough to acknowledge that they have been blundering frightfully and altogether? Why not at once introduce the Madras Notification System? Detention in the Plague Camp yet? Do they know that it is veritably a Plague Camp? that the unfortunate men, women and children are, or have been, compelled in that Camp to pay for, not to eat,—for to eat is impossible—the abominable meals prepared by some wretched Indian Brahmins inside that Camp? that if any men who could not bear to see their children starve attempted to cook their own meals, the Medical Officer—what a work for a Medical Officer !—ordered the collection and burial (!) of all the stones on which they rested their chatties and pots for cooking? But why continue the recital of the atrocities? The people have suffered enough. Let them be now left in peace. The only way in which they can be left in peace is through the Madras Notification System. Above all, why should the Government defeat its own plans by making it impossible for the people to willingly submit to the regulations? One case of successful evasion, one single day may be enough to multiply all the elaborate precautions of a year. Why then tempt men to evade the regulations, *when there is no need?*

Jaffna, }
July 11th, 1914. }

Yours, &c.,
J. M. HENSMAN.

From the "Ceylon Observer,"

April 23rd, 1915.

CORRESPONDENCE.

IMMIGRANT DIFFICULTIES AT MANDAPAM.

Dear Sir,—At the end of last month I went to Mandapam for the purpose of studying the conditions prevailing at the place as regards passengers who cross over to Ceylon. I remained on the platform until the train steamed out of the station, watching carefully the immigrant Medical Officer's doings, and the issuing of passes. I found that no white men and women were subjected to examination or detained; nor were some of the coloured passengers wearing rich European costume. These lucky souls had no more inconvenience to undergo for the sake of public health than to receive the passes from the I. M. O., who handed them over with an apologetic smile.

All Other Passengers were Indiscriminately Detained,

and they had to get away cursing, I am afraid, the I. M. O., or rather the system that makes such things possible. I was not a little surprised. Had the white passengers and the few lucky coloured ones all come from uninfected, and all the rest from infected areas? Or is it that European costume makes the wearer immune from infection, while Indian costume, however clean, is a presumption that the plague, cholera or small-pox bacillus is harboured in its ample folds? Even among those in Indian costume I noticed great difference made. Those armed with letters of introduction fare better than the rest. If, for instance, out of a batch of ten passengers from Manamadura five bear credentials from the all-powerful Marikkar, they are permitted to travel through, while the other five have perforce to go the way of the infected ones and undergo seven days' hardships and trials.

I now moved towards

Marikkar Patnam where the Ceylon Government is Erecting

pukka new camps. These, at the current rate of progress, may not be completed within two years or more. The site is by the sea and good.

My own personal experiences at Mandapam were not of the pleasantest, though I had not been detained in the camp. I was put up at the Raja's Chattram. Though meals were supplied, disgust prevented my

eating. So, I had to be content with the fruits I had. Perhaps, with the Marikkar's goodwill, I might have fared better, but, I was told, he hated me heartily and with good cause.

On the day after my arrival I went to the camp, no conveyance was to be had. Even if I could have had one, permission, they told me, from the Marikkar should be obtained to take it along the only road to the camp. On my way thither, I met the I. M. O., who informed me that he would let me travel over to Ceylon without detention or vaccination.

First, I Visited the Cooly Camp.

In reply to enquiries, I was told that the food was indescribably bad. They were grieved at not being able to observe their caste rules. All castes live and have their meals together. They loathe having to eat out of tin plates. Afterwards I attempted to visit the passenger camp, but was asked to produce a permit from the Superintendent, who, however, was then away on leave. His assistant who was acting, had no power to grant me permission. Then I went to the I.M.O.'s office. The Doctor had not arrived, and I proceeded to deposit the Rs. 51 at the Madura Company's Office. I was asked to pay five annas (31 cents) more, for which four annas (25 cents) was said to be the Company's commission and one anna (6 cents) for stamp. When I remonstrated that

The Receipt mentioned only One Rupee for Stamp and Duty

the presiding deity merely said he was not concerned with all that but such were his instructions. The mystery of the five annas (31 cents) has still to be cleared. Meanwhile, let us see how far the levy of the extra rupee is reasonable. The receipt says it is for stamp and duty. The stamp affixed is of the value of one anna. Thus the remaining fifteen annas (94 cents) is for duty. What duty? Then there is the famous deposit system, whereby the passenger is put to a lot of inconvenience, trouble and loss. In the first place, the above rupee and odd is a dead loss. Secondly, to withdraw the money in Ceylon, another 5 cents stamp is necessary. Thirdly, there is the loss of interest. Add to this the utter inconvenience and trouble of it. Against this,

What does the Government gain towards Public Health ?

The deposit is avowedly for compelling the passenger to report himself regularly to the Port Surgeon in Ceylon. But as this officer can seldom so much as look at the face of the passenger who reports himself, the duty is generally performed by a clerk. In most cases passengers report

themselves only once. Some even report by proxy. This is how things take place, but the authorities think that by having such useful rules as these famous depositing and reporting system, the island is free from infectious disease. I grant that public interest requires the continuance of the reporting system, but the due observance of this can be secured in an equally efficient degree without the deposit. I say this advisedly. Under the present conditions, what prevents the depositor, if suffering from infectious disease after his arrival in Ceylon, from preferring to forfeit his deposit, rather than run the risk of being removed to the infectious disease hospital. But it may be urged that his punishment will not end with the forfeiture of his deposit,

Since he is Liable to Prosecution

for concealing the illness. But then what advantage does the deposit guarantee? Does it guarantee under existing circumstances Ceylon's immunity from infectious diseases? The passengers detained at Mandapam are kept under observation for seven days, whereas those who are allowed to proceed without delay are kept under observation for 18 days in Ceylon. What are the medical reasons? Is it that the Doctor at Mandapam is able to find out within seven days whether a person is ill or not, and that the Doctor in Ceylon takes 18 days to do the same? Or is it that the bacilli in the body of the passengers detained there die within seven days while those in the passengers allowed to proceed to Ceylon live 18 days? Or is it that the people compelled to lead prison life in the camp and those made to walk daily for seven days about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles and back on the burning sandy road under a blazing sun observe better hygienic laws? Here again white men and women are requested by the I. M. O., to

Report Themselves to the Port Surgeon only in case of Illness,

whilst the rest are commanded to report every other day, whether ill or not. Distinction everywhere between East and West! There can be comradeship between East and West on the field of battle; but, nowhere else!

To resume the record of my doings: the Doctor reached his office at about 10-30 A.M., and among the large number of passengers, when my turn came I got a pass straightaway. This despatch I attribute to my Alpaca Coat and Vest and Gold-rimmed Spectacles and my English. I asked the Doctor to permit me to look round the camp. He very kindly complied and sent an overseer to assist me. We first visited the general wards, which were clean and well-kept. The only drawback is that all classes, Hindus, Christians and Mahomedans, are herded

together. An improvement is urgent here. These people ought to be separately housed.

Next we visited the Vegetarian wards, presided over by Brahmin cooks, who cater to Brahmins, Vellalas and such as may select to have vegetable diet.

The Only Complaint here was as regards the Food

which is badly cooked, and insufficient ghee, which is an essential of vegetable diet. I walked into the kitchen and found the complaint to be well founded. The ghee was of poor quality, and very insufficient in quantity, about $\frac{1}{8}$ of a measure being said to be allowed for about 32 persons. This $\frac{1}{8}$ will not even do for 10 persons. The butter-milk was very sour and thin, and when I asked the cook why this was so, he replied that they usually make it still thinner. I remarked that it was already thin enough and could not be thinner. Another cook said that they had already added water and would not add any more. Worst of all was the rice, coarse and hard. Each meal is charged 6 annas, a very exorbitant levy. $3\frac{1}{2}$ annas is the usual charge in all South Indian Hotels for good food. Messrs. Spencer & Co., the Monopolist contractors, must make huge profits. This monopoly should be abolished at once and several hotel-keepers licensed, to promote a healthy competition.

The store was visited next. There was a large supply of plate (of tin) retailed at $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas, another exorbitant charge. The store had large stocks of the ordinary

Vegetables, a Good Portion in a Perishing State.

Very poor gingelly oil was retailed at one rupee per measure, which is the usual price of the very best quality elsewhere. Poor cocoanut oil is sold at one rupee, whereas in Colombo it is 65 cents for good quality.

A word about vaccination, which I believe is a good thing. But why should the passenger be vaccinated again and again, each time that he crosses over to Ceylon? A specialist should be consulted, and a person should not be vaccinated unless necessary. Nectar if taken to excess, is poison.

Lastly, about

The Disinfection of Passengers and Luggage.

Even Indian gentlemen of standing clean, well dressed and travelling first class, are not exempted. You are stripped and have to stand naked save for a small loin cloth before a large gaping crowd during the period of fumigation.

The loin cloth is provided by a thoughtful and benign Government, any passengers can purchase one for himself at the stores for seven annas. My turn came, and the assistant M. O. insisted on putting my clothes through the process of fumigation. I said I was wearing cleaner and more recently washed clothes than he and his assistants. He would not yield. I went to the I. M. O., who also insisted on my clothes being disinfected. I started playing on a different key and told the I. M. O., that I had not an extra suit of clothes. This had the desired effect. The I. M. O. exempted me. The rest, however washed and cleanly clad, had to submit to the shameful ordeal of stripping in public, before a curious crowd. I am told that no exception is made even in the case of women, The Ceylon

Government Should Put a Stop to these Absurdities.

Why should all this be done in the open? Is an enclosed place so difficult to secure? As regards the

Exemption of European Clothing,

is it not, to say the least, silly to regard such clothing, often including dirty, sweat-laden shirts, banians etc., as free from any suspicion of carrying disease germs, while light, newly washed 'veshties' are deemed a hot-bed of disease. Is it medical science gone mad? Does the I. M. O. not realise that many

Hindus are Very Orthodox,

and bathe and wash their clothes daily before their mid-day meal? Does he not know that many wearing European clothes bathe or wash rarely, specially when they travel? It is naturally impossible for people in European costume to wash their clothes often when they travel. Their clothes must be washed by a good dhoby. The 'Veshties' can be washed in the train. Tweed suits are not ordinarily washable. These are facts too patent to be dilated upon.

As all rules are said to have exceptions, so does this disinfecting rule admit of exceptions, sometimes to be purchased at 8 or 10 annas.

After these experiences, I returned to town, of course on foot, along the burning sandy road under a blazing sun at half past one. The distance from the camp to the town would be over two and half miles. The passengers who went to report or to obtain their passes continued to return to town from eleven till one. Most of the people do not wear anything on their head. The doctor goes on horseback, while these passengers walk in the hot sun. He does not sympathise with them, but

asks them to visit him for several days more. A branch railway could be run to the camp from the station. But where are the merciful authorities in our midst to dream of that?

I am sorry

I Had Not the Opportunity of Staying in the Camp.

Could I have done so I should have gathered more interesting information.

Owing to these causes the Ceylon Government Railway loses much traffic. Many visitors to Ceylon have been known to break their journey and return to their homes in India on hearing of the horrors at Mandapam. On the other hand, there is a large number in Ceylon who would like to tour in South India but are kept back for the same reasons.

I wonder why the Ceylon Government troubles itself about these, when there are already so many infectious diseases permanently here! What

If the Indian Government too Chooses to Establish a Big Quarantine Station

at this end considering the infectious diseases here? What of the large supply of food that Ceylon gets from India? that is, I suppose, not detained at Mandapam; nor vaccinated nor made to report itself to the Port Surgeon in Ceylon for 18 days. Will not the rice and other food-stuffs carry germs? The general impression is that the foodstuffs do carry germs.

To sum up, the evils fall under five heads:—

1. Detention. 2. Deposit. 3. Monopoly. 4. Vaccination. 5. Disinfection.

1. Detention is unnecessary, except for coolies. The rule that passengers coming from infected areas shall be detained and those from non-infected ones shall not be detained is right. But how to discover whether a passenger comes from an infected area? What prevents a person from proceeding from an infected to a non-infected station and thence travelling to Ceylon? Out of hundreds of passengers detained at Tuticorin and at Mandapam since the introduction of these rules, can the Ceylon Government produce any record of one Englishman being ever detained at these stations?

2. The deposit is unnecessary, because it entails loss and inconvenience, and leads to corruption and malpractices.

The Object Aimed at May be Secured Without it.

Its worst point is that the prosperous middle alone is liable to it, while the highest and lowest escape.

3. The monopoly should be abolished at once, and several hotel-keepers should be licensed, to promote healthy competition.

4. Vaccination is in the present state of medical knowledge a necessity. But a person need not be vaccinated so many times and so frequently.

5. Disinfection: the medical staff should be provided with more common sense, and should be compelled to abandon their preconceived notions as between East and West. Privacy is essential. Only the cooly class, and such others as approximate to them in habits of uncleanness, should be put through the process.

Let me hope that these grievances will not fail to draw the attention of the authorities.

Yours etc.,

Colombo, }
April 22nd, 1915. }

KARUMUTTU THIAGARAJA.

From the "Hindu,"

April 28th, 1915.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The *Ceylon Morning Leader* has published a well-written letter by Mr. K. Thiagaraja Chetti on the subject of the difficulties of passengers at Mandapam. We desire to invite the attention of the local Government to this communication which is reproduced elsewhere. It will be seen that Mr. Chetti confirms the allegations already current of racial discrimination shown by the authorities to passengers, of the defective nature of the facilities afforded to coolies at the camp maintained on behalf of Ceylon, of the annoying deposit system, and of the worries of the disinfection of passengers and their luggage. The matter appears to be engaging the attention of the Government of Madras already; we would suggest a careful examination of the grievances of passengers and as it seems necessary, a frank representation to the Ceylon Government.

From the "Indian Emigrant,"

April 30th, 1915.

BY THE EDITOR.

CEYLON TRAVEL AND QUARANTINE HARDSHIPS AT MANDAPAM.

In a previous number of our journal, we had occasion to publish an account of the immigrants' difficulties at Mandapam concerning the branding and overcharging of cooly passengers to Ceylon. Various other difficulties have now begun to be felt somewhat acutely by all classes of people, before they are allowed to land in the beautiful island of Ceylon. Situated as it is in close contiguity to the mainland of India, Ceylon afforded and still offers a splendid field for mobilisation of Indian labour. No wonder then that to-day the total number of Indian population of the Island exceeds a million, and about a half of them have almost permanently settled in that Colony for many centuries and about a hundred thousand of them are the offspring of recent settlers. With the growth of business and the advancement of commerce afforded by the improved means of communication between Ceylon and India opened by the recent Talaimannar route, a large amount of labour force and passenger traffic has flowed between these two places. The latter formed mostly respectable Indian shopkeepers and petty traders who have made Ceylon their home and whose life there was one of independent means. In so far as the labour force is concerned, it is one of an organised endeavour to take into the Island Indian labour of men, women and children to work out the tea and rubber plantations, owned in a large measure by European capitalists. Believing as they do that the prosperity of the Island is due to the poor Indian cooly, it is strange that the authorities of Ceylon should not have thought it necessary to make the life of the cooly there one of less monotony and of less hardship. The cooly camp at Mandapam is enough to sicken the hearts of even the heartless.

Originally intended probably as a sifting ground to select, by a severe medical test, the pick and the best of the labourers who could stand the malarial fever and other diseases peculiar to plantations, it can be said, without the least exaggeration, that it has now degenerated into a perfect prison camp. The subject of cooly emigration to the Ceylon plantations has its own gruesome tale to tell. For the present, we shall confine ourselves to the scandalous treatment at Mandapam meted out to coolies and other classes of people.

We are glad that an Hon'ble Member of the Legislative Council has at last thought it necessary to bring the question before the Government of Madras, and we understand that the latter are about to address the Ceylon Government on the subject. We, therefore, hope that the interference of the Madras Government will secure to Indian passengers better treatment and more comfortable travelling from the mainland.

The writer of the present article has himself recently been to Ceylon, and the following account therefore partakes of the nature of a personal experience and observation.

WANT OF DEFINITE INFORMATION.

To those who wish to proceed to Ceylon from South India, either on business or for pleasure, two routes are open; the one from Dhanushkodi and the other from Tuticorin. The former is by far the more convenient route and the journey can be performed daily and is entirely by rail except for a couple of hours in the ferry when crossing the Gulf of Mannar. From Tuticorin it is twelve hours' journey by boat, the sailings being only twice a week, Tuesdays and Saturdays.

The Government of Ceylon have ruled wisely enough that no person should be allowed to land in the Colony without being medically examined lest people should bring into the Island infectious diseases. With this same view, they have established two Quarantine Stations, one at Mandapam and another at Thattaparai for the medical examination of passengers proceeding to Ceylon.

What the nature of these medical Regulations is, no one is aware of except for wild rumours that are afloat circulated by those who had experiences, which are of course different with different people; so that a definite system has not yet been adopted nor are the regulations widely circulated for the benefit of the travelling public. At present everything is left to the discretion of the Medical Officer or, to speak more practically, to the noted and well experienced Assistant Medical Officer, who is the real boss of the situation.

WHAT IS QUARANTINE.

The necessity of a permanent quarantine establishment at these places for preventing the importation of contagious diseases from India to Ceylon, as if India is the home of plague and other diseases from which Ceylon is immune, shows beyond a doubt that there is something wrong in the very system of our emigration or that is most carelessly administered.

The idea of Quarantine in any country is to prevent immigrants, suffering from what may be called "quarantinable diseases" such as small-pox, typhus fever, leprosy, plague and other infectious diseases, from landing into that country. The diseased persons are segregated and stationed in a hospital until they are cured, while those immigrants not affected with any of these diseases are landed without difficulty subject, of course, to certain restrictions.

But the system as now practised at Mandapam is something very peculiar, the compelling of every able-bodied healthy passenger, specially 3rd class passengers, to undergo the ordeal of a camp life for about a week irrespective of the health of the individual.

MAIN GRIEVANCES.

The main grievances experienced at Mandapam Station are drawn up below seriatim :—

- (1) Detention in the camp of respectable third-class passengers and sometimes of even second-class.
- (2) Monopoly of Messrs. Spencer & Co., Madras for the supply of food and provisions.
- (3) The deposit system of Rs. 50.
- (4) Vaccination.
- (5) Disinfection.

DETENTION IN THE CAMP.

(1) In the first place, the contempt shown by the Immigration Department and the Medical staff to all third class passengers and in a degree to some of the second class passengers who are ignorant of English, is something indefensible. The fact that a person travels in the third class does not itself constitute that he is fit to live only with coolies and other low class people. Men far above ordinary means travel only by third class. Even great men—like Mr. Gandhi—take a pleasure and a pride in travelling by the lowest class, and it is a travesty that such men should be huddled together with estate coolies.

No greater injury than this could be done to respectable people and to the public in general. Even rich men travelling by second class are sometimes put to the same humiliation of a camp life as third class passengers. This is mostly the case with well-to-do persons of the Chetty community; but I had occasion to know a case of a family of

Brahmins—men and women in perfectly healthy conditions travelling by second class from Palghat, driven to the camp for seven days, vaccinated, disinfected and allowed to proceed to Ceylon, requiring a further medical observation for eighteen days at their destination. This is because they do not happen to know the English language. All their remonstrance with the authorities to accept the required deposit just to avoid camp life was of no avail. This is a deliberate mischief played on the innocent people by some of the unscrupulous members of the medical staff.

As a rule all third class passengers are compelled to live in the camp for seven days at Mandapam as a preliminary to proceeding to Ceylon. In my opinion, this seems a superfluous arrangement inasmuch as they are required to undergo observation for a week or eighteen days, as the case may be, at their destination in Ceylon.

SPENCER'S MONOPOLY.

(2) Closely connected with the camp life is the question of food supply which requires greater consideration from the authorities than any other. The Regulations concerning provisions are unnecessarily severe and the food that is supplied in the camp is not of a wholesome nature. There are supposed to be three different kinds of meal, costing respectively 6 as., 4 as., $2\frac{1}{2}$ as. each, and what is actually supplied is not worth half of its value. The highest for a good meal ever charged in South Indian hotels is four annas, so that there is a clear gain of 2 As. in a meal. This high rate is due to the sole monopoly given to Messrs. Spencer and Co., for the supplying of food to the camp, and it is a grave injustice done to private hotel-keepers who are not allowed to sell food and provisions to the people. If this is allowed, under proper supervision of the Medical Officer, it will be considered more an act of charity than anything else, enabling outside passengers to lead a more comfortable life during observation days than make them have recourse to starvation in the town. Thus a healthy competition would set in leading to the improvement of the passengers' health. The meals supplied in the camp, besides being unwholesome, are supplied at very untimely hours. The morning meal is given at 9 A.M. and the evening at 5 P.M. Between these periods nothing is allowed to be eaten by the people. No one is allowed to buy his provisions and cook his own food. I am doubtful whether they are allowed to take any tiffin in the interval; but I am informed that passengers generally bribe the peons to bring secretly coffee and other light refreshments from the Brahmin cooks in the kitchen. As a matter of fact one of the disinfecting peons was dismissed on the 9th

March for accepting illegal gratification from an estate cooly ; so that, it is presumed that there is a great deal of truth in the spread of such rumours.

DEPOSIT.

(3) Europeans travelling by first class are wholly exempt from the operation of this rule. Eurasians travelling by 2nd class are generally exempt, and it is only when Indian second class passengers are concerned that the system of deposit is insisted on. If this is one of the Immigration Laws of the Ceylon Government, it should apply to all immigrants irrespective of white or black, whether they travel in cabins and saloons or in the steerage. If the deposit system is a provision against pauperism or against public charge, does it mean that there are no paupers amongst the whites, howsoever they may manage to travel by first class.

This money provision is generally adopted by the Government of distant countries such as Canada, U. S. A. and Australia to which men resort from distant places ; and even then, this is no hard and fast rule as to the amount of money an immigrant should bring with him.

The immigration authorities there consider, among other matters, the occupation, the chances of securing a particular employment, the mental capacity of each individual.

At all events, the man must have enough to provide for his reasonable wants until such times as he is likely to find employment. A deposit, if there should be this system at all, of Rs. 10 or 15 is a sufficient guarantee against pauperism. But there is absolutely no meaning in the Government of Ceylon having the deposit system which gives rise to several abuses in demanding the money. Already an extra sum of Rs. 1-5 is demanded along with the deposit of Rs. 50, for which no satisfactory explanation is given to the depositors. Even if they are demanded an extra rupee for the pocket money of the clerk, they have to pay because it is the clerk's order.

There is also the further difficulty of securing back the deposit money from the Government. I have heard of a case in which the deposit was returned only after four months. Considering these difficulties, the Ceylon Government will do well to abolish this system altogether as all money transactions are likely to create unscrupulous practices.

VACCINATION.

(4) This is one of those technical questions the efficacy of which against infection has often been questioned even by experts. An article on

"Small-pox and Vaccination" published in the *Indian Daily News* stated that Lord Lister admitted in the House of Lords that *it was possible to infect healthy persons with various filthy diseases through vaccination*. The British Parliament appointed a Royal Commission to enquire into the effects of Vaccination upon human health, and as the result, amended the Vaccination Law in favour of conscientious objectors. The result of the amendment is, that "considerably more than half the children born in this country (England) are now unvaccinated, and small-pox has never been so rare as it has been for years past." This is the present theory of Vaccination, but so long as the system has unfortunately come to stay in this country as a necessity in medical matters, its abuses only remain to be rectified.

The curious point to be noted regarding this matter at Mandapam is the frequency with which people are teased with this process. As many times as a passenger travels by this line to Ceylon, he should get vaccinated no matter how long before he got vaccinated. The Mandapam Medical authorities have thought it fit to make vaccination valid only for a month. If any person happens to travel half a dozen times in a year, he should be vaccinated also half a dozen times, although as a matter of fact it is considered proof against infection by experts for five or six years. I had occasion to see a man in Kandy with several marks of vaccination complaining bitterly against this system. Further, if people should go to the camp with marks of recent vaccination by other Medical Officers, it was not accepted as the vaccination was not done in the camp itself. These abuses of the staff should be checked by the Medical Officer whose duty it should be to see that these petty tricks are not imposed chiefly on the illiterate people.

Another fact which was brought to my notice is a kind of vaccination or, as the people put it, "deep scratching by a peculiar instrument resembling the fork." What amount of truth there is in this rumour I am unable to verify.

DISINFECTION.

(5) A short personal experience with reference to this matter in the camp will be somewhat interesting.

After depositing Rs. 50, I took the receipt to the Medical Officer for getting the passport. The Assistant Medical Officer closely followed me; but I could not guess his object in so doing. Lest the Medical Officer should, on seeing the deposit receipt, grant the pass, the Assistant Medical Officer standing by my side at once suggested to the Medical

Officer that my luggage and linen should be disinfected. The Medical Officer asked me whether I had brought any luggage. I said they were kept in the waiting room of the station. He then ordered me to get them to the camp to be disinfected. I explained that my linen were all clean and fresh from the dhoby. He could not agree to anything of the sort and left me to the mercy of his Assistant. The latter's order was more peremptory than the Medical Officer's. I argued with the Assistant that it was nearing 11-30 A.M., that I had no coffee or breakfast till then, that no cooly or carriage was available to bring the luggage from the station to the camp, and that my luggage was already disinfected, by its being away from infection. He would not yield; but said that I must bring the luggage before 12, by which time the infection process closes. I then thought that I had no hope of visiting Ceylon but only return back to Madras. With this impression I left the camp, starving and walking two miles in the hot sun. I was so tired that I never cared to go to the camp again for disinfection, preparing all the time for the worst to happen.

An hour or two later I sent a letter to the Head Clerk of the camp asking him to return to me the deposit receipt, and to my great surprise and satisfaction the Assistant Medical Officer comes to me with the passport and the Deposit Receipt about the train time. Then I praised the Lord in Heaven for allowing me to pass to Ceylon without being infected.

This is the kind of trouble and petty annoyances which the Medical stellites are bent on giving the poor people like us. If I had not openly defied their orders, I could not have gone to Colombo by that evening train, but would have to wait another day in that desert place.

Thus, I had not the good fortune of observing what disinfection is really about. The general complaint is that old rotten dirty clothes used by several others are given to people for temporary wear till their clothes are disinfected. If one should require a fresh cloth, he has to pay 7 annas, the price of a new one. What an absurdity it is that a man should not be allowed to wear his own clean cloth, but to wear only the dirty ones given by the authorities. These, in brief, are the main grievances.

MINOR GRIEVANCES—A LEGION.

Space forbids my traversing in detail other grievances which are a legion. I shall only recount them serially with a short explanation.

(1) *Ten minutes time at Mandapam insufficient to issue passes to all.* The South Indian Railway Boat Mail arrives at Mandapam at 3-20 and leaves at 3-30. Within these ten minutes the Medical Officer tries to

issue passports to all. As he could not, within that time, issue passes to all passengers, (only 1st and 2nd class) some of them have to stop there and start the next day. To avoid such inconvenience the Medical Officer is given a first class passage as far as Dhanushkodi to see that passports are issued to all. This is never taken advantage of, but only the passengers are inconvenienced.

Originally passengers are allowed to deposit the amount with the Madura Co. as soon as the train arrives. This method was found to save much time both to the passengers and the Medical Officer. The latter, after satisfying that the deposit is made, issues passes immediately. But now the Medical Officer has issued an Edict that no deposits should be received by the representative of the Madura Co. without the Medical Officer's permission. The effect of this order must be obvious. Some of the passengers are detained for want of time to get the passes, which happens in this way. As soon as the train arrives the Medical Officer boards the first class compartments and issues passes to Europeans. In the meanwhile deposits are made by second class passengers to Madura Co. and the receipts got ready. Now nobody could pay the amount until the Medical Officer gives a written order and he could not be disturbed for a permit while issuing passports to the first class passengers. Much time is thus wasted and all are not able to pay the deposit, get the receipt and then the pass.

(a) Medical Officer's order *re* deposit is therefore arbitrary and should be done away with.

(b) Medical Officer should not for want of time inconvenience passengers and unnecessarily delay them by not legitimately doing his work.

(2) Third class passengers after camp life are not allowed to go by the boat mail to Dhanushkoti but carried in a special cooly train. This is unjust.

(3) So also third class passengers returning from Ceylon are not allowed to proceed by the same mail train at 8 A.M. They are detained at Dhanushkoti for customs examination and then taken by a special train at 12 noon. More customs officers should be appointed to examine all passengers.

(4) In the Thattaparai Camp all third class passengers are compelled to take second class tickets by the boat whether there is cabin or not. This matter is very serious and should at once be put an end to.

(5) It is rumoured that all private hotels and stall-keepers at Mandapam and Dhanushkoti are to be abolished from the 25th instant

and Messrs. Spencer & Co., should take the entire monopoly. Will the Government interfere in the matter and see that there is healthy competition and no favouritism.

(6) Travelling diet for coolies on the last day of departure is a loaf of bread and little sugar costing As. 4. This is quite insufficient.

It is not to be supposed that I have exhausted all the ills and hardships, but I hope that the enumeration of some of these grievances will also be taken as recommendations for their removal.

From the "Madras Times,"

May 6th, 1915.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

QUARANTINE.

The Ceylon Government has desired very wisely that the thousands of coolies that migrate from India every year into the island shall not import disease as well as labour, and they have accordingly established a quarantine station at Mandapam at which all passengers from India are medically examined. All third class passengers, coolies or otherwise, are generally detained for a week in the quarantine camp, and, according to accounts, they are subjected to a number of vexatious regulations. It is always, of course, the case that quarantine regulations are vexatious; and it is advisable to swallow a good many grains of salt along with the many complaints. Complaints, however, about the treatment of third-class passengers during the week's detention at Mandapam have been very loudly voiced, and it is to be hoped that the authorities will assure themselves that the regulations at Mandapam are not more vexatious than they need be. In the last number of the "Indian Emigrant" the Editor gives an account of his own experiences at the camp, and he represents conditions as being very far from ideal. A week in a quarantine camp is necessarily very much like a week in prison; but the authorities should see to it that the seven days' imprisonment is not made seven days' suffering. It would be an evil result of the conditions if they tended to check intercourse between India and Ceylon. An inquiry into the grounds of complaint might very happily be made by the authorities; and it is a satisfaction to be told that the Madras Government are moving in the matter.

From the "Madras Mail,"

November 27th, 1915.

THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, CEYLON QUARANTINE REGULATIONS.

The Hon'ble Mr. M. RAMACHANDRA RAO moved:—

"This Council recommends to H. E. the Governor in Council that representations be made to the Government of Ceylon that the present quarantine regulations imposed at Mandapam on passengers and coolies to Ceylon should be withdrawn, and that till such withdrawal steps may be taken to withdraw the permission to recruit coolie labour from the Madras Presidency to the Island of Ceylon."

In so doing he said that the Government of Ceylon for the purposes of the tea and coffee estates in that island had, during the last 30 or 40 years, pursued a policy of encouraging emigration to that island. Ever since 1871, the rate of emigration into Ceylon had been 70,000 or 80,000 per annum. Since the establishment of the Indo-Ceylon railway connection, the question of the passenger traffic to Ceylon had been very much before the public. The numerous grievances of the quarantine were ventilated in the Ceylon and Indian Press and also in this Council by a notice of a Resolution from Mr. Kesava Pillay. Mr. Ramachandra Rao heard various representations on this matter. When recently he went to Madura and Ramnad, he visited the quarantine camp at Mandapam and had also had the advantage of communicating with some gentlemen in Ceylon. All these people felt very keenly the existing state of things in regard to the working of the quarantine regulations. He understood that the Madras Government appointed a Committee to meet the representatives of the Ceylon Government two months ago. Although he had made attempts to ascertain from the Madras Government what Report the committee had made on the matter, he had not succeeded in learning anything about it. The Surgeon-General and Mr. Loftus Tottenham were the members of the Committee, and he was moving in this matter without knowing anything in regard to their Report. This was a matter in which the Government could very well have associated with the Committee a non-official representative like the Hon'ble Mr. Rama Iyengar. But the Government had not chosen to do this. This was a sore point on both sides.

The Hon'ble Member next drew the attention of the Council to the quarantine rules at Mandapam which were published in the S. I. Ry.

Guide. From these it was clear that at present the Rules provided that all European First Class and Second Class passengers were allowed to take a permit to go across to Ceylon, but first and second class of other nationalities must either stay in the camp for seven days or pay a deposit of Rs. 50 if they wished to be observed on the other side. That was one of the disabilities to which the travelling public was subjected. In this connection he referred to the appeal the Hon'ble Sir Harold Stuart made in the Convocation Address for better Indo-European relations, and he (Mr. Ramachandra Rao) would only say this, that if the Rules framed by a responsible Colonial Government made this difference between one set of passengers and another, the rapprochement would be somewhat retarded. Probably the Government of Ceylon is a very much smaller concern than the Government of this country, and the liberal ideas which prevailed here might not reach them. The racial discrimination imposed by the Rules was felt as a great humiliation, by first and second class Indian passengers. It was quite likely the complaint had been somewhat lessened, but there was great difficulty in getting a refund of the deposit made to enable first and second class passengers to cross over. Numerous complaints had been made about the non-return of this money. The whole system was objectionable from every point of view. The second complaint was with regard to the detention of third class passengers for the necessary period of quarantine. The Ceylon Regulations were observed in India and the South Indian Railway Company refused to give a ticket to go across unless the Ceylon Regulations had been observed. These Rules were being worked by the Ceylon Government on this side, without any authority, to force passengers to remain under quarantine. The third class passengers, as a general rule, were detained whether coming from infected areas or non-infected areas, merely because they all travelled together and were liable to infection. The Hon'ble member next referred to the hardships of the rules in regard to vaccination, disinfection of clothing, herding of passengers together without reference to caste or creed, the selection and internal working of the camp. In conclusion he urged the Madras Government to make representations to Ceylon on this matter, and if the representations were not listened to, that they should retaliate by withdrawing permission to that Government for recruiting the coolies whose depletion in large numbers affected the agricultural prosperity of South India.

MR. AHMED TAMBI MARAKAYAR.

The Hon'ble Mr. Ahmed Tambi Marakayar, in seconding, said :—I have been receiving complaints from many of my constituents in the southern Group whom I represent in this Council, and who have large

business dealings in Ceylon, that the treatment they receive at the hands of the Ceylon authorities who are in charge of the Mandapam Camp is unbearable. I think with a view to minimise the inconvenience and hardship our Indian passengers are now undergoing, our Government should suggest to the Ceylon Government to allow all passengers who come from uninfected areas possessing medical certificates of health to travel free from any restrictions, as in the case of importation of cattle into the Straits Settlements from Madras and Negapatam, and I am glad to say this system works out most satisfactorily. I do not know the reason why the Ceylon Government should have their own authorities here and impose such a hard embargo on Indian passengers. On the contrary, other Colonies such as the Straits Settlements are not doing so; in fact, are allowing importation into their Colony of all passengers, including deck passengers, who are passed by the Health Officer appointed by our Government. I think it is only proper that our Government should undertake the improvements in the existing conditions without hesitation in order to safeguard the interests of our Indian subjects.

DR. T. M. NAIR.

The Hon'ble Dr. T. M. Nair supported the Resolution most heartily. It was not necessary for him to explain the general hardships to which third class passengers were subjected to at Mandapam. He was more concerned with the question whether they were legitimately subjected to those hardships. The Hon'ble Mr. Ramachandra Rao need not take very seriously the distinction made in the Quarantine Regulations between European and Indian passengers. For railway purposes the classification was not the same as what an anthropologist would give, and he did not think with Mr. Ramachandra Rao that this distinction in classification need put an end to the rapprochement referred to by Sir Harold Stuart in his Convocation Address. The sting of the scorpion was in the tail, and so was the sting of the Quarantine Regulations. A third class passenger, whoever he might be, must stay and undergo quarantine, the first and second class passengers could at least get over it by depositing a sum of Rs. 50. This reminded him of the prevention of landing of destitute aliens, if they could prove they had the money they could land. But was there any logical or scientific justification for this step of detaining passengers and really interfering with the liberty of the subject? The Regulations connected with landing from ships were entirely different so far as land passengers were concerned. A passenger going from India to Ceylon was a land passenger and not a sea passenger, for the restrictions were all exercised on land before crossing over. There was absolutely no justification

whatever for detaining these passengers, and the action taken by the Ceylon Government was absolutely illegal. Taking the scientific point of view, it was the rat flea that conveyed the infection. That being so, no good was done by the detention of individuals, but more good was done by disinfection. If they simply detained a man he might still carry the flea with him, and wherever he went would carry the infection, and once infection was carried it was an extremely difficult thing to stop it. Why the Ceylon Government did all this he did not know. They wanted people to go over, yet they subjected them to all sorts of indignities before they crossed over. He had noticed that the treatment of the poor coolies by the Ceylon officials was rather curt. There must be something in the minds of the Ceylon Government that made them do all this. It was about time they put a stop to this and made the Ceylon Government respect the people of India as they respected their own people. If the Ceylon Government would not listen to reasonable proposals, effective retaliative measures should be adopted. It was absolutely necessary that a strong protest should be made.

MR. A. G. CARDEW.

The Hon'ble Mr. A. G. Cardew said that the Hon'ble Mr. Ramachandra Rao had concluded his speech by the remark that his suggestion consisted of two parts, one that a representation should be made, and the other, if this representation was not listened to by the Ceylon Government, permission to recruit labour in this Presidency should be withdrawn. But the actual terms of the Resolution were rather different from the statement of its meaning. It was not clear whether the Hon'ble Member wanted, without further negotiation, to present at the head of the Ceylon Government, not merely a pistol but a machine gun! He would point out that no permission was required to recruit labour in India for Ceylon. The Indian Emigration Act expressly excluded the Island of Ceylon from its operations and the Government of Madras could not therefore withdraw their permission to recruit. It was possible by legislation to create the necessity for such permission. The Government of India could by passing a fresh Act lay down that the permission of this Government was required before any labour was recruited.

The particular question before the Council, however, related to the existing system of the preventive arrangements which the Resolution intended to draw attention to. The Hon'ble mover would be glad to know that the Madras Government had been in communication with the Government of Ceylon for some months. The Ceylon Government were addressed in the month of April last and practically every point which

Mr. Ramachandra Rao had raised in the Resolution had been brought to their notice. The Government of Ceylon, however, looked at the matter from a different point of view. Their reply, however, was not wanting in conciliation, and the Madras Government thought it necessary that some representatives of this Government should confer with the representatives of the Government of Ceylon. This Conference took place, and the conclusion that the Madras Government came to was that the position was still unsatisfactory, and they had accordingly further addressed the Ceylon Government as to the necessity for some change, and the matter was under negotiation between the Madras Government and the Government of Ceylon. Hon'ble Members would realise that in a matter of this sort it was impossible to lay on the table at this stage of the progress of negotiations the correspondence that passed between the two Governments. They might trust their own Government to do their best for them. The Government were glad to hear the views of Hon'ble Members who had spoken on the matter. It was an obvious fact that this Resolution which had been brought before the Council would be a point in dealing with the Government of Ceylon. He did not propose to follow Dr. Nair through his arguments on the legal and scientific aspects of the question. They were now trying to arrive at *amodus vivendi* with the Ceylon Government, and it would be most unsuitable that they should attempt to do anything that would harm the prosperity of the great island of Ceylon, except as a last resort when all negotiations had failed. He had great faith that the negotiations would be brought to a successful termination.

MR. K. RAMA IYENGAR.

The Hon'ble Mr. K. Rama Iyengar was very glad to hear what Mr. Cardew had stated, but there were one or two points which he wished to bring definitely to notice. Whatever might be the position, third class passengers were not at all satisfied at being kept together irrespective of class or creed and to be made to have their meals together on a common platform, and to take such meals as were supplied by the Agent of Messrs. Spencer & Co., Ltd. First and second class passengers felt annoyed at the meals served and the charges demanded and the difficulty they had in getting proper meals even if they paid for them. The way in which people were grouped together was more likely to create infection than to effect disinfection. The giving of the monopoly for meals to a Company, and thus preventing other persons from coming and supplying food, was a wrong step. The liberty and the rights of subjects ought to be protected to the fullest extent.

AN AMENDMENT.

The Hon'ble Mr. B. V. Narasimha Iyer observed that as there was practical unanimity between the Government and Hon'ble Members he wished to suggest an amendment omitting the latter portion of the Resolution and substituting therefor the words "are modified so as to remove the invidious and unnecessary distinction and all the unnecessary hardships caused to passengers."

The Hon'ble Sir Hugh Fraser seconded the amendment, which was accepted by the Hon'ble Mr. Ramachandra Rao.

The Government expressed their willingness to accept the amended Resolution.

The Resolution was by leave withdrawn.

The "Madras Mail,"

November 29th, 1915.

EDITORIAL.

The quarantine regulations between India and Ceylon were roundly condemned. It was complained that the Ceylon Government, who were responsible for the Regulations, had no legal authority to impose quarantine on people before they left India, and that distinctions were made between Indians and Europeans, which were calculated to create race animosities. Third-class passengers were not allowed to leave India before they had undergone a period of quarantine, and the conditions in the quarantine camps were scandalously bad. The Madras Government were asked to use their influence to have these conditions mitigated, or, failing a satisfactory reply from the Ceylon Government, to retaliate by stopping the recruitment of Indian coolies for the Ceylon labour market. The supporters of the Resolution were evidently not aware that recruitment for Ceylon is not governed by legislation, and retaliation would, therefore, be impossible, without an alteration of the Law. It is clear that the Ceylon Government have created a great deal of ill-feeling by the character of these Regulations, and the quarantine camps, if all that was said about them is true, are in urgent need of reform. We are glad to know, therefore, that the Madras Government have no intention of allowing things to go on in the present unsatisfactory manner, and the Hon'ble Mr. CARDEW'S speech on the subject will be read with pleasure

by all. It should not be difficult to arrive at a satisfactory solution of the difficulty, since the Ceylon Government are not likely to be so blind to their own interests as to risk their labour supply by forcing South India to take measures of reprisal.

The "Madras Times,"

November 29th, 1915.

EDITORIAL.

QUARANTINE REGULATIONS.

And the Mandapam Quarantine Station.

The resentment which has been occasioned by the hardships which Indian passengers to Ceylon undergo at the quarantine station at Mandapam found expression at the Legislative Council on Saturday. The position was clearly set forth in an able speech by Mr. Ramachandra Rao. At present the rules lay down that Indian passengers, or rather certain Indian passengers,—for, as Dr. Nair pointed out, the regulation does not apply to all Indians—are compelled to submit themselves to quarantine. While first and second class European passengers are allowed to cross with a permit, Indian passengers travelling in the same classes are compelled either to submit themselves to observation in the quarantine depot for seven days or pay a deposit of Rs. 50, to deposit which virtually means that they have to lose a day on their journey while its recovery is both a long and doubtful process. We agree that this distinction is unjustifiable and humiliating. But the lot of the better class passengers is happy compared with that of the third class passengers as described in the debate. These, whether coolies or ordinary travellers, are

COMPELLED TO REMAIN SEVEN DAYS IN QUARANTINE

whatever their condition may be. It does not matter whether they come from a plague-ridden district or one which has never seen plague. They are third-class passengers, and that is all that the Ceylon Government apparently takes cognisance of. The Ceylon Government is equally indifferent to such questions as caste or religious scruples, and not very particular, we are informed, regarding questions affecting the privacy of the passengers. All, men and women alike, are herded together in large sheds, they are not even allowed to make their own arrangements regard-

ing food, this being provided by contractors, and generally speaking their lot is made entirely unhappy.

And

WHY ARE THESE HARDSHIPS IMPOSED ?

Because the Ceylon Government fears that unless quarantine is observed plague may be introduced into their island. Presumably they base their action upon the clause in the Venice Convention of 1897 that during the prevalence of plague every country has the right to close its land frontiers. But that clause, we believe, was intended to be applied mainly to countries where the plague had manifested itself in a virulent epidemic form, and it cannot be said that this is the case at present in Madras. Further the scientific objection to such quarantine has been rightly urged that plague being carried by fleas, and no steps being taken to prevent the transmission of fleas, even during quarantine, it is scientifically unsound. It is worse than unsound, it is positively dangerous, for the manner in which the people are herded together is likely to increase the number of fleas, not diminish them. It is probable, however, that the Ceylon Government does not credit the flea theory, and so regulate their action by their belief in some other method of contagion. As has been said,

THEIR ACTION IS UNFAIR

because it makes no distinction between passengers from plague-affected, and from non-affected districts. A passenger from Madras, for instance, where plague is as liable to quarantine as a passenger from Salem, where plague is comparatively common. And quarantine at Mandapam is unjustifiable, because the Ceylon Government have no jurisdiction at that town, and it is only by acting through the railway in the matter of the sale of tickets that they can enforce the regulations. But neither the Railway nor the Madras Government are to blame. In Saturday's debate Mr. Cardew made it abundantly clear that Government have spared no effort in their attempts to bring about an improvement in the methods prevailing, and negotiations are still proceeding. It is hoped that they will prove successful, otherwise it is possible that drastic measures will have to be taken by the Madras Government. The Ceylon Government, if it does not desire to see the

MEASURES AGAINST THE EMIGRATION OF COOLIES TO CEYLON

passed in this Presidency, would do well to mark the tone of Saturday's debate and guide their action accordingly. Though, as Mr. Cardew said, the members of the Legislative Council may not wish

to hinder the progress of Ceylon by interrupting its labour supply, they will not hesitate to take such steps as will have this effect if the Ceylon Government remains indifferent to their demands for fair treatment for coolies and passengers alike. Mr. Cardew, speaking on behalf of Government, agreed that they might ultimately have to resort to such measures, and we know that non-official members are prepared to introduce and vote for a Bill which shall prevent emigration if the negotiations fail.

What is more, they will have with them

THE SYMPATHY OF VERY LARGE CLASSES OF PEOPLE IN THE PRESIDENCY,

particularly landholders, who are already suffering keenly owing to the constant drain of coolies from their districts. In one district alone the cost of cultivation has gone up by nearly one hundred per cent, solely owing to the higher cost of labour and the scarcity thereof, brought about by the growth of emigration. There would then be very little opposition to such a measure in this Presidency. We printed yesterday a telegram which had been received by the "Times of Ceylon" regarding the possible discontinuance of traffic on the Indo-Ceylon railway connection owing to the great loss which the South Indian Railway Company are suffering on its working. The loss is due, we understand, to the

VERY MUCH HIGHER FREIGHT CHARGES ON THE CYLON RAILWAYS

compared with those on the South Indian Railway. This has had the effect of making the route unpopular for the transit of goods. The restrictions regarding passengers, to which we have referred above, have made the route not less unpopular with Indian travellers, and we are assured that many have been restrained from making the journey by the knowledge of the hardships which they would have to undergo at Mandapam. Thus for two reasons the Indo-Ceylon connection, started with such brilliant prospects a comparatively short while ago, is already doomed to failure, and in each case the Ceylon Government is to blame. Our Ceylon contemporary suggests that the negotiations now under way in respect to the goods traffic are likely to have the result of removing the drawbacks at present existing. Let us hope—more for the sake of Ceylon industries than for Madras—that the negotiations at present being conducted between the Madras Government and the Ceylon Government will be equally successful. If they fail, the Madras Government, as we have shown, has the people's mandate to take steps to follow a policy of reprisal.

The "Madras Times,"

December 14th, 1915.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CEYLON QUARANTINE REGULATIONS.

SIR,—I am sorry to find a serious error in the interesting discussion of the Ceylon Quarantine Regulations in the Legislative Council. The Honourable Members have, I regret to say, in the course of the debate been mistaken in saying that first and second class Indian passengers, who make a deposit of fifty rupees are allowed to proceed without detention at Mandapam. This statement is too broad and sweeping, and is therefore incorrect. The fact is that most of them are detained at Mandapam for seven days. In the first place there is no general rule at all to the effect that every depositor of fifty rupees may escape detention. Next the purpose of the deposit is altogether different; it is meant as a guarantee that persons coming from *non-infected areas only* and moving into Ceylon without detention will report themselves duly to a Medical Officer. But even people proceeding from *non-infected areas* are wrongly regarded by the Ceylon Government authorities as if they came from *infected areas*. Nay more—an Indian dressed in Indian costume and talking an Indian Vernacular only is *ipso facto* looked upon as coming from an infected area, as if Indian costumes and languages bred infection. I know for certain that over 75 per cent, of those who pay down the deposit of Rs. 50 have to go into quarantine at Mandapam. Here two questions may arise. First, what happens to the remaining 25 per cent of the passengers? They escape detention because they possess influence. Even western clothes and language have much influence; not to speak of letters of recommendation. Next, as to the question, Why then deposit at all the answer is that people think, if they deposit Rs. 50, they may have a chance of escaping detention altogether, or barring that, they may at least be allowed to remain outside the camp. But even the latter is impossible at times. I know one Mr. O——K who in my presence was refused permission to remain outside the camp, although he held a receipt for the deposit of Rs. 50. I have in mind several other such cases. Thus, so far as persons travelling from infected areas are concerned, there is absolutely no difference between one who has deposited and one who has not, except that the former has sustained some loss and trouble for indulging in the foolish hope that his deposit should release him from detention. The word "System" finds no place in the whole vocabulary of Quarantine Regulations.

The passengers are not compelled to stay in the camp for the purpose of being examined, but, I am afraid, to enrich the high-priced establishment which holds the catering monopoly inside the camp. I do not know why the quarantine authorities sympathise with that feeding house! Mr. Hensman writes to the "Ceylon Morning Leader" on the 11th July, 1914 :—

"That the unfortunate men, women, and children are, or have been, compelled in that camp to pay for, not to eat, for to eat is impossible, the abominable meals prepared by some wretched Indian Brahmans inside the camp?..That if any men who could not bear to see their children starve attempted to cook their own meals, the Medical Officer ordered the collection and burial! of all the stones on which they rested their chatties and pots for cooking?"

By the bye, in your sympathetic and out-spoken leading article of the 29th ultimo you say :—

"While first and second class European passengers are allowed to cross with a permit, Indian passengers travelling in the same classes are compelled either to submit themselves to observation in the quarantine depot for seven days or pay a deposit of Rs. 50, to recover which virtually means that they have to lose a day on their journey."

Now, I cannot imagine what you would say or how lengthy and sympathetic an article you would write when you learn that Indian passengers have to lose seven days and not "one day" on their journey to that inviolable island of Ceylon.

Madura,
December 9th, 1915. }

Yours etc.,
KARUMUTHU THIAGARAJA CHETTY.

The "Ceylon Morning Leader,"

December 17th, 1915.

EDITORIAL.

CEYLON CHARGED WITH INVIDIOUS DISTINCTIONS.

It would be useful if more people in this country realized the trend of opinion in Madras regarding this Island's Officials and its enlightenment. It will come to most readers with the shock of astonishment to learn that the Madras Legislative Council unanimously passed a resolution accusing Ceylon of making invidious and unnecessary distinctions and causing needless hardships in the manner in which the Island regulates the passenger traffic between India and Ceylon. A debate took place on the 25th November when Mr. RAMACHANDRA RAO moved the Government of Madras to have the Ceylon quarantine regulations improved, or if the

Ceylon Government would not listen, to forbid the recruiting of coolies in India. His complaint arose largely out of the manner in which Indian passengers are treated at Mandapam during the quarantine detention. He said :—"Probably the Government of Ceylon was a much smaller concern than the Government of this country and the liberal ideas which prevailed here, might not reach them." He proceeded to say :—"The racial discrimination imposed by the Rules was felt as a great humiliation" and he concluded that unless the Ceylon Government minded its ways Madras should retaliate by stopping the recruiting of coolies. Dr. T. M. NAIR contended that the Ceylon Government was not legitimately entitled to impose these hardships and he considered the action of our Government absolutely illegal. He said the Ceylon Government wanted people to cross over and yet imposed all sorts of indignities on those who crossed over. In passing, he remarked upon a quality of the Ceylon official which is not unfamiliar to us: he said the Ceylon official was very curt in his treatment of poor coolies and he insisted that Ceylon should respect the people of India as much as it respects its own people. Mr. CARDEW, speaking for the Government, threw oil over these troubled waters. He pointed out that no Government permission was required for Ceylon recruitment in India. The matter had formed the subject of frequent conferences, and negotiations were then proceeding. The attitude of the Ceylon Government was still unsatisfactory, but he hoped for an improvement. He deprecated any attempt by the Madras Government to wreck the prosperity of Ceylon, "except as a lost resort"—an ominous conclusion. The resolution was then amended and the Government accepted it with a declaration that our regulations entailed invidious and unnecessary distinctions and unnecessary hardships on Indian passengers.

It is not the first time we have heard of such complaints. We have to-day a letter from a distinguished Indian journalist on his way to America, who writes to us a story of what he saw with his own eyes. If true, the incident is most discreditable to Ceylon. He describes how a young woman was prevented from leaving the boat to enter the train at Talai Mannar. Her appeals were pitiful, but vain. The boat deck was abandoned by every passenger except the solitary woman. Our correspondent made personal inquiries from the doctor, the Customs Officer and the Police Sergeant, but none of them would give him any explanation of the remarkable incident. He considers the treatment of this woman rude and worse. He gives the name of the woman, the number of her ticket and the date. We are sending the letter to the proper authorities, and regret that we cannot, consistently with our practice, publish the full text which, though alleging a serious incident, is unfortunately

unsuited to our columns. Our readers will remember other complaints, equally inexplicable, arising out of the manner in which Ceylon is earning a reputation for harshness at Mandapam. Notable among those who have written on the subject are Mr. J. HENSMAN of Jaffna and Mr. KARUMUTHU THIAGARAJA, the latter of whom is at the moment in Ceylon, still keenly interested in the question. Of course, the Government of Ceylon has a very perplexing task to discharge. It cannot safely undertake risks to the public health, and in view of the frequent and serious occurrences of small-pox, plague and cholera, traced in almost all cases to passengers from India, we cannot be too careful to enforce restrictions. At the same time, we really doubt whether much of the discreditable impression created in India is not due to the incapacity, obtuseness and even stubbornness of those whom the Government has to employ in carrying out these difficult restrictions. It is a situation which requires sympathy, tact, patience, gentleness and circumspection. These are not common qualities, specially in the lower levels of the Public Service. Mistakes there must be, but some of the incidents that come to public notice are more than mistakes: they are wilful. And the worst of it is that in some cases every single regulation is broken and all our safeguards prove useless because instances are not unknown in which men who ought to have been detained have been released. It is time the Government considered the matter.

The "Ceylon Morning Leader,"

December 22nd, 1915.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MANDAPAM DOINGS.

SIR,—There is not one Governor of Ceylon. There are several. For my present purpose, it is enough to point to one at Mandapam, and to another at Talai Mannar. The former masquerades in the guise of a Medical Officer, and the latter in that of a Police Sergeant. Each of them says in his small sphere, "I am Lord of all that get near, and my will there is none to dispute."

Here is the latest. I passed through Mandapam and Talai Mannar on the evening of Tuesday the 30th November last. And this is what happened or took place under my eyes. I was in a first class compartment, and the Medical Officer came to my window, and put to me what I

believe are the usual questions, my name, place of origin, of journey, destination &c. I answered his interrogatories. He at once produced a printed form of declaration to be signed by me, in which I was made to promise that I would report myself daily during the next seven days to a Government Medical Officer in Jaffna. He added verbally that I need not report myself *unless I fell ill during that period*—and at my request he added this clause in his own handwriting on the form. I signed and was at once granted a pass the *Open Sesame* which was to give me leave to enter my own country without going through the terrors of the Mandapam Camp. At least, so I thought at the time, for I did not then know of the jailor who had the power to shut the gates in my face if he chose, at the Talai Mannar landing. But of this Cerberus later on.

The moment I received my pass, I turned round to see what was happening in other compartments of the train. I found a wealthy Nattukottai Chetty who was also a first class passenger with three or four others of his party who had apparently also travelled first class with the Chetty, standing on the platform with the most woe-begone looks. I found on inquiry that they had all been ordered to stay behind! Most of them are wearing rather gorgeous silk coats to prove, I suppose, that they were not of the common rabble. But to no purpose. The X-rays of the Medical Officer at once saw the Chetty within, the money-grabbing, 36 p. c.-interest Chetty, without whom, however, Ceylon could not get on one single day. So the Chetty and party got stranded in that God-forsaken wilderness of sand, Mandapam. No doubt he and his people underwent the usual experiences, but he does not know English, and so his woes must remain unsung.

If this was what happened to a first class Indian passenger, the fate of second class Indian passengers is easy to imagine.

In reply to a letter of mine to the Chairman of the Plague Committee some five months ago, that Officer wrote to me to say that third class passengers travelling with permits granted by the Chairman in advance and health certificates from responsible Medical Officers in India must nevertheless be, and are “in practice” *invariably detained* at Mandapam as they are likely to have become infected during their journey in a third class compartment. The question naturally arises, why then detain first and second class passengers if they happen to be non-English-knowing natives of India and Ceylon?

I have been asking the Ceylon Government over and over again during the last two or three years to lay down clear rules under the Ordinance and to enforce them without distinction of race or creed in all cases, so that passengers may know in advance what to expect. But even in the latest communication I received from the Government, about

four months ago, the statement was made that the Medical Officer at Mandapam must be given discretionary power though the Chairman has a different story to tell, viz., that third class passengers are *invariably* detained. If ignorance of English is always a reason for detention, why not honestly say so?

On board the steam launch I met a very respectable young man, a native of Tinnevely District in India, who had arrived at Mandapam on the 27th November, as a first class passenger. He was detained at Mandapam for three days and granted a pass to proceed on his journey only on the 30th November, after three days' detention. Here is a case in point to illustrate the arbitrary proceedings of the Medical Officer, who is given discretionary power to do what he pleases. Why was this young man detained at all? Apparently because he knew no English. Why was he detained *three* days? Which is the epidemic disease whose period of incubation is just three days? I know of none, nor does medical science know of any. It is thus clear that the young man was detained to no purpose.

I proceed now to say something of the all-knowingness and self-sufficiency of that mighty potentate at the Talai Mannar pier, the Police Sergeant. There were several European passengers on the steam launch who were landing at the pier with me on the 30th November. But, so far as I could observe, there is no inquisitorial questions asked of any of them. I was subjected to a volley of questions, and had the good fortune to satisfy the inquisitor. But I had heard on board the steam launch of his extraordinary doings not long before. A Punjaubi who with his father had been for several years settled at Calcutta as a partner of a small firm calling itself Marshall and Co., sola-topee manufacuturers, arrived at Mandapam on his way to Colombo, in order to take charge of a branch to be opened at Colombo, but was held up at the Talai Mannar landing by the Police Sergeant for no reason except that he was a Punjaubi! He had enough papers about him to prove the truth of his statement, hundreds of printed notices, telegrams received by him from his father and so on, but the Police Sergeant had decided that Punjaubis were taboo, and he stuck to his decision that if the young Punjaubi could not produce Rs. 150 to prove that he was not an undesirable alien, go back he must to Mandapam. Crowds of Afghans are allowed to get into Ceylon, the Sergeant not knowing the method by which his Rs. 150 test is evaded. Among the crowd, there are one or two capitalists who distribute sums of Rs. 150 to each of their destitute compatriots just for a half hour, for a consideration! The whole lot pass through, and the monies at once go back to the original owners! The Punjaubi young man had brought with him just the amount required for his journey, because he knew that

at Colombo where all the preliminary arrangements for the opening of the branch had already been completed he could draw from his father's correspondents as much money as he wanted.

Another case was that of two Malayalees, or Cochins as they are called in Colombo, who were the prosperous proprietors of a native restaurant in Colombo. Being well off in Colombo, they thought it as well to settle down comfortably in the land of their adoption. They went to Malabar and returned with their wives, little thinking of the Cerberus that was lying in wait for them at Talai Mannar pier. The Cerberus in his infinite wisdom decided that they, the women, were prostitutes, and nothing could shake his conclusion. So the dreams of the two Malayali men of making for themselves a comfortable home in Colombo vanished into thin air, and they had perforce to take their wives back to Malabar.

In my letter, to the Colonial Secretary, of December, 1914,—a copy of which I sent to you some time afterwards—, I said that if impossible conditions are imposed on passengers, they must and will be evaded. So the pity of it all is that the hardships inflicted on passengers at Mandapam and Talai Mannar are *absolutely useless*. If valuable clothes worn by women are immersed in acids and other disinfectants for the purpose of disinfection, the veriest booby can understand that the clothes will be ruined. So, what is it that happens? The menial whose duty it is to disinfect passengers' clothes is bribed, and all that he does is to go through a farcical process of disinfection which is no disinfection at all. And so on. And so on.

The folk at Colombo have been for years applying the flattering unction to their souls that it was only the Chairman of the Plague Committee, who by his futile regulations had kept the plague at bay for so many years. That the regulations had nothing to do with the immunity of Colombo for many years will be plain as a pike-staff to any one who has bestowed careful thought on this question.

Such big cities as Madras, Trichinopoly and Madura have been free from plague these eighteen years, though millions of people from plague-infected areas have been entering them. The only precaution taken was the simple passport system, and even this has been abolished for the last two or three years. Climatic conditions apart, the only thing that has kept those cities immune is that they were kept free from sanitary or rather insanitary conditions which favour the origin and propagation of plague. Why not attend to these in Colombo, and leave the Indian passengers alone?

Jaffna,
December 17th, 1915. }

Yours etc.,
J. M. HENSMAN.

From the "Madras Mail,"

April 7th, 1916.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CEYLON QUARANTINE REGULATIONS.

SIR,—The Government of Madras have been in communication with the Government of Ceylon on this important subject ever since April last. One would expect that a matter of such immediate urgency and trouble and annoyance to the public would be set right in a much shorter time. However, as a year has elapsed, it will not be long, I suppose, before the question is brought to a conclusion, and it may be worth my while to strike the iron while it is hot.

To come to the subject at once, what is expected and desired is that there should be a *complete suppression of the system of detaining passengers as well as depositing money.*

If these two grievances were not redressed, it would be considered by the people that nothing at all had been done to relieve them of their troubles.

It is, indeed,

THE DETENTION

that the passengers of all classes—1st, 2nd and 3rd,—feel extremely painful as a source of great inconvenience, trouble and loss of money and time. One who is not accustomed to simple habits and common fare has to undergo a cruel ordeal in that sandy desert—Mandapam—even when held up there for a day. For such gentlemen to remain there seven days, denied the commonest conveniences, is a thing likely to tell on their health.

The passengers while leaving their homes for Ceylon feel as if they were going to the Andamans or to Jail, sentenced to rigorous imprisonment. I know hundreds who do not return to their homes in India from Ceylon for marriage, deaths and other business unless it is absolutely necessary—under the scare of the seven days' detention and hardships at Mandapam. They make trips up and down as seldom as possible to diminish the number of detentions, which they feel to be a great vexation. But for this the Indians would go to and come from Ceylon as people from Madura District go to and come from Madras. For a similar reason some have to forego their pleasure-trips.

The Ceylon Government do not gain anything at all by carrying out this system so strictly. The enforcement of these rules only fosters malpractices. To quote one or two instances, a passenger sends a proxy, who undergoes the seven days' trials and hardships at Mandapam in order to secure a pass, and at the expiry of the period, he appropriates and uses that pass, without which one cannot cross over to Ceylon. The Ceylon Government has no system of verifying whether the person who has submitted to all its ceremonies is identical with the one who passes over to Ceylon. A few spend about fifteen rupees and get over the difficulty of detention. While some escape detention by some such way, others—and they are about 75 per cent—are forcibly detained and have to suffer.

The rule that passengers coming from *non-infected* areas and who deposit fifty rupees shall not be detained and those from *infected* areas shall be detained, is absurd in two ways. First, how can they find out whether one comes from a non-infected area or not, as the British and the Ceylon Governments define plague-infected areas in different ways? What prevents one from going from an 'infected' to a 'non-infected' station and thence travelling to Ceylon? Next, one coming from a 'non-infected' area and unable to pay fifty rupees as deposit is 'detained' in the camp with those coming actually from 'infected' areas since there is no separate camp for passengers coming from each area. Is this fair? Is it not against hygiene? However unfair or unreasonable it may be to the people of India, the Ceylon Government overlook this, and adopt in vain ill-suited measures to keep diseases out of the Island. The pity of it is, our Government tolerate all this even to-day. Now to come back to the point, this rule is not strictly observed since not only Europeans but even the Anglo-Indians travelling by third class are exempted.

Next stands the famous

DEPOSITING SYSTEM.

This too is absolutely unnecessary. The object aimed at can be easily secured without this, since the passenger who does not report himself to the Medical Officer is liable to prosecution even after his deposit has been confiscated. This rule also is not strictly observed. Europeans go scot-free, they deposit nothing at all. The Ceylon Government would rely on a European for fifty rupees but not an Indian; why do I say Indian? It will not trust even her own son, the Ceylonese. If the Ceylon Government made exemption in the case of Chetties, then there might be some meaning. For it is an admitted fact that Chetties would rather stand a confiscation of their whole wealth than a prosecution.

Then comes,

THE MONOPOLY, VACCINATION, AND DISINFECTION.

These inconveniences too will disappear, once detention of passengers ceases. This is the chief grievance beside which all the rest are trifles.

Ceylon cannot but depend upon India for its food supply. Then how does it keep away the rice and other foodstuffs carrying contagious bacilli ?

There might be some show of reason for enforcing this disagreeable rule when there was little need of it, if Ceylon were exempt from plague and other contagious diseases ; but, small as it is, its nine Provinces are not more plague-free than the 26 Districts of the Madras Presidency.

I heard from a reliable source that the Ceylon Government maintain all the existing regulations. They hold this opinion, I suppose, because a first class camp is being erected at a cost of nine lakhs. Nine lakhs was the original estimate, but I was recently told by a Ceylon Government Surveyor that it will cost them over fifteen lakhs. It is ridiculous to say, "because we have spent an enormous amount and erected a building you must stay there seven days." Is it in the least reasonable to say because one has wasted money, another must be put to inconvenience and trouble.

THIS IS NOT BRITISH JUSTICE.

Such are the evils under which we are groaning. What is the remedy ? The remedy would lie in the Madras Notification System, which need not be described here. It is by long odds better than the Ceylon system.

Madura }
April 3rd, 1916. }

Yours etc.,

KARUMUTHU THIAGARAJA.

From the "People's Magazine,"

April 30th, 1916.

EDITORIAL.

THE PLAGUE COMMITTEE.

The Plague Committee is a small body of officials whose hobby is the destruction of the rat-flea. But their activities apparently embrace also the suppression of coolies and other vermin, particularly those vicious persons who habitually travel third-class by rail and on decks of old rocking bottoms. We do not profess to understand how the rat-flea gets into the coolie, because we have no very clear idea of how it gets into the rat in the first instance. But we suppose it is all fully explained in learned books which the members of the Committee duly possess, even if they do not duly peruse. Our anxiety is only to glean some information about

THE VAGARIES OF THE RAT-FLEA

for satisfying our own morbid curiosity and enlightening others likewise situated. We can understand the unwillingness of the plague bacillus to fasten itself upon first and second-class passengers on our trains and steamers. They are proverbially snobs and superior people with whom there can be no sustained or profitable communion. Also, many of them inoculate themselves with some sort of poison which makes them unwelcome subjects for members of the genus *Pulex*. With third-class travellers, however, the domestic rat is upon terms of greater intimacy, and the

INTRODUCTION OF A MUTUAL FRIEND,

in the person of the flea, is an ordinary part of the amenities of life. We had no idea, however, the flea suffered from the peculiar distemper which sometimes overcomes visitors to the East. But if Rumour be not a wicked jade, the fact is otherwise. The flea, it would appear, maliciously attacks persons of a dark complexion, especially if they do not have sufficient silver in their pockets, and leaves those of paler hue severely alone. And the authorities have, therefore, reluctantly to allow European and American passengers to travel without interruption on the Indo-Ceylon route,

WHILE THEY OFTEN-TIMES DETAIN OTHERS

at a segregation camp for a week or so, to cheer their loneliness. The officials in charge, however, are prepared to deny themselves this pleasure under certain conditions, the most important of which is the payment of fifty rupees as a guarantee that the party will report himself for a certain number of days at an appointed medical office. On due compliance with these terms, the deposit is, we hope, returned. Now what seems queer to us in all this is that, so far as we know, no person who has been thus permitted to continue his journey under the deposit system has either developed, or died of, the disease he indemnifies himself against. In other words, no person who is able to plank down fifty rupees

IS EVER ASSAILED BY THE RAT-FLEA.

In still other words, the rat-flea is a Government monopoly reserved purely for the delectation of those hapless persons who cannot stump up the required deposit and have to go to Mandapam to meditate upon the strange caprices of Fortune—and of fleas. If Mandapam were like "Gay Paree," or the Detention Camp like Delmonico's, the hospitality thrust upon sojourners might not be ungratefully refused. But Mandapam enjoys climate which is nine months hot and three months hotter in the year, and there is only the gecko on the wall and the Indian Ocean around to enliven the sennight's existence; and although everything one wants, and one does not, has to be dearly paid for, the general air of the camp suggests

MORE AN ELEEMOSYNARY INSTITUTION

than a business establishment for those who expect nothing for nothing, and are prepared to pay through their nose for small mercies. Many complaints have been made, from time to time, by persons who have been compelled to make their acquaintance with the Guardian Deities at Mandapam, but we are averse from enlarging upon the grievances, knowing well the difficult and delicate task before the authorities. Considering the daily increasing passenger traffic between India and this Island, however, we think it is time the authorities carefully looked into the matter, and improved the service and arrangements at the station to make life less intolerable. We heartily sympathise with the anxiety of Government to preserve this fair Isle from the devastating epidemics which ravage the neighbouring continent, and think great credit is due to the authorities for the measure of

SUCCESS WHICH HAS ATTENDED THEIR EFFORTS.

But suitably with that desire the suffering entailed upon the victims of the preventive system may be considerably reduced without prejudice to the public health or the effective policy of medical control. We commend the matter to the attention of both the travelling public and the Government.

From the "Ceylonese,"

May 3rd, 1916.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MANDAPAM CAMP REGULATIONS

SIR,—As one of the numerous Indian merchants who carry on business in Ceylon and who have frequently to cross over to and from India and make use of the Talaimannar-Danushkodi route, I beg to approach you for the ventilation of a much resented grievance. Daily there are scores of respectable men, women and children travelling by this route, who under the quarantine regulations of the Ceylon Government, are detained for a number of days at Mandapam. Enough has appeared in the Ceylon and Indian papers of the needlessly harsh character of these regulations, and I do not wish to repeat the complaints that have been so frequently made against them. The worst anomaly that has in my opinion contributed more than anything else to make the detention at Mandapam an intolerable hardship, is the fact that a European firm of Madras has been entrusted with the work of feeding the hundreds of orthodox high caste Hindus who are kept in semi-confinement at the Camp. It is well known that not a single European, whatever his station in life may be, is detained under the quarantine regulations. That being so, it is hard to understand how a foreign Company who cannot reasonably be expected to appreciate the requirements, sentiments and dietetic habits of the Indian people and especially those who have not adopted Western modes of living, came into the business at all.

There is hardly any matter in which the Hindu is more particular than his food and the manner in which it is prepared and served. These feelings are respected scrupulously even in the battle-fields of Europe to-day, where the Indian soldier is fighting for the King-Emperor. Even the strenuous and difficult conditions obtaining at the battle front have

not been regarded as an excuse to ignore the scruples of the Hindu regarding his personal habits of life. Yet nothing could be more repulsive to the Hindu passengers detained at Mandapam than the promiscuous manner in which their food is prepared and served by Spencer and Co.'s staff of servants.

There are many enterprising Indians with the necessary capital and capacity who would be quite willing to undertake this work.

Let Messrs. Spencer and Co., continue to cater to the European and Europeanised passengers as they have done hitherto so well. But let the more conservative Indian be catered for by someone who understands him better. This is but fair, and I hope that the Ceylon Government will lose no time in remedying this defect in their Indo-Ceylon Railway arrangements and the beneficent effect will become apparent in a very short time.—Yours faithfully, AN INDO CEYLON MERCHANT.

From the "Ceylonese,"

May 3rd, 1916.

EDITORIAL.

THE MANDAPAM CAMP.

Complaints about the treatment of passengers interned at the Mandapam Quarantine Camp are all too common. We are publishing this morning a letter from a prominent Indian merchant bitterly complaining of the violence done to the religious susceptibilities of the Hindus in this camp. It would appear that the food meant for the Hindus are prepared by a European firm who do not know and cannot appreciate the scruples of Hindus with regard to their food. As our correspondent points out, the British Government does all in its power to prevent any room for complaint as far as the food supply of the Indian troops at the front are concerned. We would therefore urge upon those responsible for the treatment of passengers at the Mandapam Camp the desirability of an immediate change in the methods adopted, for to the Easterner there is nothing so galling and humiliating as violence done to certain religious susceptibilities and scruples, however trifling they may seem to the European.

From the "Hindu,"

May 6th, 1916.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Representations on the numerous grievances of a large number of Indian passengers who make use of the Talaimannar-Danushkodi route to Ceylon at the Mandapam Camp have appeared in the Press, and the needlessly harsh character of the quarantine regulations has been pointed out. A correspondent in the *Ceylonese* draws attention to a strange anomaly which is bound to give much hardship to the Hindus, namely, that a European firm of Madras has been entrusted with the work of feeding all the Hindus who are detained in the camp, sometimes for seven days together. It is a matter of bare justice that the Ceylon Government should respect the feelings and sentiments of the travelling public, and we hope that some arrangement would be made by which Indians would be permitted to cater to the needs of those Hindus who have scruples to have their meals from the European hotels.

From the "Indian Patriot,"

May 9th, 1916.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MANDAPAM SCANDAL.

The Sufferings.

SIR,—A near and dear relation of mine came from Ceylon some time back on a visit to me. When he had completed it he applied to the Chairman of the Plague Committee at Colombo and obtained a pass. It directed the quarantine officials at Mandapam to pass him on, provided that he did not proceed from any infected area and that he was free from any contagious disease. He was further armed with a certificate from Assistant Surgeon of the town where he was staying with me, stating that he was free from any infectious disease, that he was personally healthy, and that he had disinfected him, his clothings and other effects. To add to all these, as a respectable gentleman, he was well clad as young men of these days do, and travelled in the second class. For some unknown reason or other, he was detained at the Mandapam Camp, and

compelled to eat the wretched food cooked there. As a result of his stay at that unfortunate place which is worse than hell, he writes to me as follows:—"After my last trip to Southern India I have resolved never to go there any more, because I suffered so much that I thought I was dying at the (Mandapam) Camp."

It was mere wantonness that induced the quarantine authorities to detain this young gentleman. He is one that never travels without a servant, but he took no one owing to the difficulties thrown in the way of travellers by the Ceylon Government. Amongst the people who are interested in the detention of passengers at the camp are Messrs. Spencer & Co., though they are not responsible for it. It is, therefore, their duty to see that every man is supplied with such food which he generally takes and which is palatable to him. Every man who makes up his mind to stay at the Mandapam Camp, and undergo the ordeal, has to pay down in advance the cost of seven days' food. The lowest figure is Rs. 2-10-0 and the rate is enhanced according to the class of the ticket of the passenger. Six annas a day for a third class passenger is very liberal when it is remembered that he maintains decently a family on four annas a day. It is therefore reasonable that the passenger should be supplied with such food as he would relish. The food that is prepared by Madura or Tinnevely cooks, will not be relished by Madras, Malabar or Ceylon men, and *vice versa*. The Ceylon and Malabar men use only cocoanut oil, while it is a poison to the Madras man. When food prepared in gingely oil is forced on Ceylon and Malabar men they fall ill. All those difficulties are brought on the people of Southern India by the Civil Servants' love for the reason that blood is thicker than water.

Colour has much to do in the treatment of travellers, and the following from the '*People's Magazine*' published in Colombo, will show how much it is resented in that Colony.

"The Plague Committee is a small body of officials whose hobby is the destruction of ther at flea. But their activities apparently embrace also the suppression of coolies and other vermin, particularly those vicious persons who habitually travel third class by rail and on decks of old rocking bottoms. We do not profess to understand how the rat flea gets into the coolies, because we have no very clear idea of how it gets into the rat in the first instance. But we suppose it is all fully explained in learned books which the members of the Committee duly possess, even if they do not duly peruse. Our anxiety is only to glean some information about the vagaries of the rat flea, for satisfying our own morbid curiosity and enlightening others likewise situated. We can understand the unwillingness of the plague bacillus to fasten itself upon first and second class passengers on our trains and steamers. They are proverbially snobs and superior people with whom there can be no sustained or profitable communion. Also, many of them inoculate themselves with some sort of poison which makes them unwelcome subjects for members of the genus *Pulex*. With third-class travellers, however, the domestic rat is upon terms of greater intimacy, and the introduction of a mutual friend in the person of the flea, is an ordinary part of the amenities of life."

I have great mind to publish this letter, over my own name, but as I may have to visit Ceylon, for obvious reasons I fear to do so.

From the "Ceylonese,"

May 9th, 1916.

EDITORIAL.

THE MANDAPAM CAMP.

I.

We agree that this island must be kept free of the epidemics that ravage the neighbouring Continent. We agree that this has to be done at any cost, even if it should involve the most irksome restrictions on personal liberty. But it is not clear that the comparative immunity enjoyed by us is directly traceable to the work at Mandapam. According to the report of the Chairman, Plague Committee, for 1914, Ceylon was free from plague for 18 years up to 1913 because till then the plague did not appear at any place south of Madras with which there was direct trade communication from Ceylon. The fact is the quarantine authorities at Mandapam were set a very easy task at the very outset and they have been doing it with as much inconvenience and worry to the public as possible. They wish it to be understood that, if not for their never-failing vigilance, the people of this fair isle would have suffered all the horrors of plague and cholera. This complacent optimism must, however, be qualified by the recent outbreak of plague. If our immunity depended for a time on plague giving South India a wide berth, it is equally certain that the Mandapam regulations, in spite of their stringency, have, for once at least, failed to maintain that immunity. There seems to be a sort of superstitious belief that the Mandapam Camp is the place where all sorts of infectious cases are successfully treated or safely disposed of otherwise. Nothing can be further from the truth. In the first place, owing to one of the causes indicated above, there were very few cases requiring treatment at Mandapam. During the year 1914 the number of infectious cases treated was 34. There were only five cases of cholera, and nine of small-pox. The Camp was free of plague. The number of deaths was four, three being due to cholera, and one to small-pox. In this connection it has to be remembered that some of the cholera cases occurred just prior to their departure from Camp. It would, therefore, be interesting to know how the medical authorities account for the occurrence of these cases. Either the disease must have been imported into the Camp from outside or the infection must have occurred within the Camp itself. The former alternative is out of the question because the doctor on duty would have been able to detect a cholera case before or soon after entering

the Camp. The second is more probable though the Quarantine Medical Officer assures us to the contrary. "The temporary nature of the Camp buildings and the incompleteness of sanitary arrangements" are, in our opinion, factors which do not make for immunity from infectious diseases. And this is our most pressing grievance: the Mandapam Camp, far from being the germ-free paradise it is reported to be, is itself a place where it is possible for cholera to thrive. It is, therefore, time that the public and the Government rated the Mandapam regulations at their real value, which certainly does not come to much. But the pity of it all is that a delusion, fostered with surprising assiduity by interested parties, has been allowed to impose untold hardships and suffering on thousands of poor people passing through the Camp.

From the "Ceylonese,"

May 10th, 1916.

EDITORIAL.

THE MANDAPAM CAMP.

II.

We wish to draw the attention of the Government to the complaints that have appeared of late in the press both here and in India, complaints that throw a lurid light on the measures adopted to deal with an evil which is at best problematical and which can be rendered nugatory by less harsh and high-handed methods. In spite of repeated protests, the Government of Ceylon has developed a paternal fondness for the deposit system. We are told that the deposit of Rs. 50 acts as an effective check on those who might otherwise find it troublesome to go on reporting themselves to a Medical Officer for eighteen days without missing a single day. It may, however, be doubted if the virtues attributed to the deposit are not less real than imaginary. If the Government will only suspend the provisions penalising breaches of quarantine regulations, it will easily find out which check is more effective, the forfeiture of Rs. 50 or the certainty of a heavy fine with the alternative of a few weeks in jail. For our part, we feel convinced that the deposit system, instead of serving any useful purpose, has become an institution that lends itself to the pettiest and most annoying kinds of oppression which only the genius of rapacious subordinates is capable of inventing. The

fear of punishment combined with such safeguards as are automatically provided by notifying the Plague Committee, the Provincial Surgeon, and the Chief Headman of the district to which the passenger belongs, is in itself sufficient to ensure his good behaviour. To deny this is tantamount to saying that the efficiency of the machinery for correction at the disposal of the Government is inferior to that of the deposit system and its devotees at Mandapam—a proposition which is absurd on the face of it. But the hardships of the depositor appear quite insignificant when we come to consider the case of those who are detained in the Camp and compelled to live under conditions which, to some of them at least, must be absolutely horrifying. It is hardly creditable to the Government that people who are accustomed to the standard of living prevalent among the middle classes, should find themselves thrust into the company of estate coolies and forced to share the scanting comforts of Mandapam with companions whose notions of comfort may not be outraged by what would be intolerable to others. The evil does not end here. Why should cooked food be supplied to passengers, if they think they can cook for themselves? We are sure that the arguments adduced in favour of the present system of feeding cannot hold water for a moment. If food supplies cannot be guaranteed as from non-infected areas in the case of those wishing to do their own cooking, it would be instructive to know how Messrs. Spencer and Co., are able to give satisfactory guarantees on that score. It stands to reason that, if it is possible for this firm to procure its raw foodstuffs from non-infected areas and keep them free from infection, the Government too can get somebody to do the same thing but supply the foodstuffs uncooked to those passengers wishing to cook their own meals. As to lack of fresh water, we wish to know how Messrs. Spencer and Co., get “an unlimited supply,” while the Mandapam Camp is so badly off. If the former bring their water from a distance it is open to the Government also to do the same. The danger arising from promiscuous fires can be averted by confining all cooking work to the least dangerous portions of the Camp. Besides the practice of creating a monopoly in food supply is most objectionable and we trust that Government will encourage competition and thereby ensure the excellence of the food supplied. In conclusion, we hope that the travelling population of India and Ceylon will not be forced to submit to needless suffering and expense by the continuation of the deposit system and the objectionable features of the food supply noticed above. The difficulties experienced by immigrants at Mandapam have become a positive scandal, and the time has come for bringing them to a speedy end. We hope there will be no delay.

From the "Ceylon Morning Leader,"

May 12th, 1916.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HINDUS AT MANDAPAM CAMP.

Dear Sir,—Since reading your masterly editorial of the 27th ultimo on the lamentably unbusinesslike manner in which the Ceylon Government has managed the Railways in the Island in general and the Indo-Ceylon section in particular, I think it would not be out of place to draw your attention to just one outstanding anomaly which, I as an Indian and Hindu think, calls for immediate correction. In the course of my business I have been forced to make use of the Talaimannar route rather frequently since its opening. Not belonging to any of the favoured and lucky classes which are exempt from detention at the quarantine camp at Mandapam, I have had the opportunity of watching at first hand the life at the camp. We have come to regard the quarantine regulations as a necessary evil and however unpalatable they may be, there is little doubt that they are intended to protect the Island from the Plague and other epidemics which so largely prevail on the neighbouring continent. Therefore, I am not one of those who oppose the detention of passengers at the camp, though the manner in which these regulations are enforced leave much room for improvement. But what I do object to, in the name of the Hindu passengers to which category I belong, is the way in which those detained at the camp are catered for during their stay there. The first meal for the day is served at about 8 A.M., and the second and last at 5 P.M. These hours are wholly unsuitable to the habits of the Indian, who under no circumstances has his dinner in the afternoon. A good many of even the third-class passengers are people of respectability and social status. It would be stupid to think that merely because a person travels third-class, he is on the level of the cooly. I would merely say that there is as much respectability among the third-class passengers in India as there is in England; and who would dream of taking any liberties with a European merely on the ground of the class by which he travels? This being so, is there any justification to force free and respectable men who pay for their use of the Railway, to change their life-long habits? This is not all. The indiscriminate employment of cooks, the serving of the meals in tins (how disgracefully this approaches prison life!) and the general lack of appreciation of the

scruples of the Hindu in the matter of his diet, make the stay in the camp as loathsome as the Ceylon Government, which has such a perfect genius to do just the wrong thing, could make it.

How in the name of common sense an English firm in Madras came to be entrusted with the cooking arrangements for the thousands of native Indians at Mandapam is a fairly tough puzzle. Messrs. Spencer and Co., cater excellently in the refreshment cars and rooms for the passengers who are Europeans or have adopted European modes of living.

The South Indian Railway Company with the sagacity and sound common sense that have marked all its doings, gets Spencer and Co. to cater to these while it gets Indians to cater for the requirements of the orthodox Indians. When will the Ceylon Government listen to the voice of elementary common sense and get an enterprising Indian to undertake this business?—Yours, &c., INDO-CEYLON MERCHANT.

April 30th.

[We heartily commend this thoughtful and reasonable letter to the attention of Mr. Bowes.—Ed., *M.L.*]

From the "Madras Mail,"

May 17th, 1916.

EDITORIAL.

CEYLON QUARANTINE REGULATIONS.

At the first sessions of the Madras Provincial Conference, which opened at Madura on Monday, a resolution was adopted protesting against the Ceylon quarantine regulations enforced at Mandapam against Indians proceeding to that colony, and suggesting that if the Ceylon Government did not accede to the demands without delay they should be threatened with the "big stick" that has been found so efficacious in the case of South Africa, namely, the prohibition of emigration. We are quite prepared to admit that the quarantine restrictions imposed at Mandapam are unduly severe, and are regarded as such by Indians who are going to the island either on pleasure or business, but we must also admit that the Ceylon Government are perfectly entitled to protect the

island against the importation of epidemic disease of any sort. They have had experience of it in the past, and in the light of that experience they have determined to act. We heard little or nothing about these quarantine evils in the days when the most frequented route to Ceylon was *via* Tuticorin and Colombo; that we do so now is due to the fact that the conditions have altered and the place where the quarantine regulations are put into operation has been brought nearer home. Quarantine restrictions there have always been, but in the old days they were enforced at Colombo, as the most convenient place. The opening of the railway route has altered conditions to such an extent that it is necessary to enforce the regulations before the labourers enter the island. The reason for this is not difficult to find. By the old sea route the coolies were under control from the moment they boarded the steamer at Tuticorin to that when they stepped ashore at Colombo in the quarantine yard, and there was little chance of their dispersing *en route*. With the railway route the conditions are reversed, with the result that the place for imposing the quarantine regulations has been placed at the Madras end of the route instead of Ceylon.

As to the reprisals threatened, it is curious how consistently people forget, or ignore, the fact that emigration from India is not all indentured, and, therefore, under some sort of control. Emigration to Ceylon and the Federated Malay Straits is free, and the form of reprisal suggested by the Conference could not be enforced without the Government of India interfering with the liberty of the subject in a way that our Indian friends would be the first to resent. We have admitted that the quarantine regulations are vexatious and inflict a hardship on many Indians visiting Ceylon on business or pleasure. They are unduly strict with regard to the labourers going to the planting districts in Ceylon, and they are harassing and possibly degrading in the case of others. It ought to be perfectly possible for the Ceylon Government to frame regulations which will draw the line between the estate coolies and others going to Ceylon. In both these directions the Government of India might make representations to Ceylon, using as an argument in favour of rational and considerate treatment of Indians the fact that Ceylon is so absolutely dependent on India for its labour that it cannot afford to create a feeling of soreness and injustice in the centres from which this labour comes.

From the "Madras Times,"

May 26th, 1916.

BY AN EYE-WITNESS.

QUARANTINE RESTRICTIONS.

At Mandapam.

Since the question of the imposition of quarantine restrictions on passengers proceeding to Ceylon, was first raised in the Local Legislative Council a couple of months ago, I have been anxious to ascertain, at first hand whether the disabilities imposed on Indian passengers to Colombo by the Ceylon authorities at Mandapam, under the guise of quarantine regulations, were really as stated in the Legislative Council or whether those statements were greatly exaggerated. Taking advantage of my being in Madura for the Madras Provincial Conference, I paid a visit to Mandapam and saw for myself the restrictions imposed on Indian passengers. From what I saw I have come to the conclusion that there could be no more undesirable distinction between Europeans and Indians than that which is now being made at Mandapam. The description given in the Legislative Council of the hardships of Indian passengers, which are also graphically detailed in a pamphlet issued by Mr. Theyagaraja, of Madura, was only too true, and it is the bounden duty of Indian leaders to demand that the invidious treatment now accorded to Indians be put a stop to at once; otherwise our Legislative Council ought to frame a scheme of reprisals on passengers coming from Ceylon.

THE PRESENT PROCEDURE.

The procedure at present adopted by the Ceylon Medical Officer stationed at Mandapam is as follows: On the arrival of the Boat Mail, he boards the train and issues passes to every European First and Second class passenger, including Eurasians and those who dress in the Western style, and who have a Portuguese or a Western name, and in this pass are included the Indian servants of the European or Eurasian passengers. But when he comes to Indian First or Second class passengers proceeding to Ceylon, the medical officer invariably asks them to get down and to come and pay him a visit next morning at the quarantine camp. The next morning these unfortunate Indian passengers have to appear before the medical officer, who directs them to stay for a day or two either in the quarantine camp itself or outside it,

and then allows them to proceed to Colombo on their depositing Rs. 50 as security that they will report themselves to the authorities at Colombo for a definite number of days. All third class passengers are compelled to undergo quarantine for six days in the camp, where they are subject to all sorts of difficulties. I have personally noticed a few cases in which the Medical Officer carried out his duties in a most arbitrary manner, simply because the expression "at his discretion" is embodied in the Quarantine Regulations. There were two passengers—one a rich banker of Mint Street, and the other his personal assistant—both of whom travelled from Madras on the 18th instant with second class tickets for Maradana. On arrival at Mandapam on the following day, they were asked to go to the camp the next day, where the medical officer in the exercise of his "discretion" proposed to pass only the banker and not his personal assistant, though both were prepared to give a security of Rs. 50. The result of this decision of the medical officer was that the sowcar decided to go back to Madras. Again five students reading in a school in Ceylon left Trichinopoly on the 16th instant with second class tickets for Wattigama and arrived at Mandapam the same day. There they were detained till the 20th when only three students were allowed to proceed on payment of a deposit of Rs. 50 each. And what happened to the rest I do not know. The impression that was left on my mind was that any person with a European or Eurasian name, with his chokras Palayam and Ramasami, is allowed to proceed scot-free with a passport by the same train as that by which he arrives at Mandapam, while the Indian passenger, however high may be his social status, is asked to stay for a day and compelled to pay his respects to the medical officer and is allowed to proceed to Ceylon only on deposit of Rs. 50, while his servant, if he happens to travel in the third class, has to undergo quarantine for the necessary number of days. Thus the Hon'ble Mr. Ramasami travelling first class is subject to detention at Mandapam for a day or two and has to pay a deposit of Rs. 50, while Palayam, the chokra of a Mr. Herrmann, drawing a salary of Rs. 7, is in a much better position than the honourable gentleman who may be in receipt of an income of Rs. 4,000 to Rs. 5,000. This state of affairs is absolutely deplorable and utterly intolerable, especially when it is sought to be enforced on the people of this country by a foreign Government whose jurisdiction lies only in the Colony of Ceylon.

NOT WARRANTED BY THE RULES.

I tried to ascertain how far the high-handed procedure adopted by the medical officer at Mandapam was justified, and I was told that the reason for adopting these invidious distinctions was the belief that a

European was more immune from diseases than an Indian, and, therefore, it was that such differential methods of treatment came to be adopted at the instance of the Ceylon Government. I then tried to ascertain whether there were any rules authorising the medical officer to impose these undesirable restrictions on Indian passengers, and I found that the following rules were found exhibited in the Railway waiting rooms and railway carriages; and I take it that these are the rules under which the medical officer at Mandapam is empowered to act :—

- “1. No passenger ‘via’ Dhanushkodi or ‘via’ Tuticorin will be allowed to land in Ceylon without a health pass issued by the Medical Officer, Mandapam, or the Medical Officer at Tuticorin, as the case may be.
- “2. European passengers travelling first and second class and in transit to steamers in Colombo will be allowed a through pass.
- “3. First and second class passengers will be required to undergo quarantine ‘if from infected areas’ unless they can satisfy the Medical Officer that they have been under surveillance for the previous seven days and have not been exposed to infection subsequently, in which case they may, at his direction, be allowed a pass on proof of deposit of Rs. 50 with the Madura Company or other authorised Agent or the Chairman, Plague Committee, Colombo, and signing a bond promising to submit themselves to surveillance for such period as may be ordered.
- “4. Third-class passengers will be required to undergo quarantine except personal servants accompanying their masters who, if they produce to the Ceylon Quarantine Doctor at Mandapam a certificate from the Health Officer of the District from which they have come stating they have been duly examined and disinfected, will be allowed to proceed to Ceylon with their masters without being detained at Mandapam for disinfection.
- “5. Personal servants of passengers ‘via’ Tuticorin may accompany their masters, and disinfection will be carried out the same day before embarkation.”

Reading these rules one will find their proper interpretation to be that European first and second-class passengers who are in transit to steamers in Colombo are the only people to be allowed a through pass; but no other, whether he be European, Eurasian, or an Indian under Rule No. 3 first and second-class passengers, are required to undergo quarantine if from infected areas, unless they have been under surveillance for the previous seven days and have not been exposed to infection, subsequently.

The main question which arises under this rule is, which places are considered "infected areas"? I ascertained at Mandapam that practically all stations in India are considered infected. At first I thought that infected areas meant areas infected with plague, but I was told that it meant areas infected with plague, cholera, small-pox, and even fever. If this is the definition to be given to an "infected area," then all passengers should have to undergo quarantine unless they have been previously under surveillance. If they have been under surveillance, then the medical officer is given the discretion of giving a pass on proof of deposit of Rs. 50 to enable the passengers to proceed to Colombo on their signing a bond, promising to submit themselves to surveillance for such period as might be ordered. This rule is enforced only in the case of Indian passengers; they are either asked to remain under quarantine for six days or to pay a deposit of Rs. 50 and to sign a bond, after which they are allowed to go. But no servant of an Indian passenger travelling first or second class is allowed to go with his master without quarantine for the requisite number of days, though his doing so is provided for under Rule 4; no two friends travelling together as companions can be sure of being allowed to proceed to Colombo as companions because the medical officer may say at his "discretion" that only one of them could go on paying a deposit, but not the other. No one can be certain even that a husband and wife travelling together would be allowed to proceed to Colombo together, for it is possible that, in the "discretion" vested in him, the medical officer may say that the husband might go after paying a deposit of Rs. 50, but not the wife, who must remain in the quarantine camp, in which case the husband would have no other alternative but to remain in the quarantine camp along with his wife or to leave her in the camp and ask her to come after him to Colombo. Thus it will be seen that the procedure at present adopted by the medical officer can receive no support from common sense or from justice or from the rules and regulations imposing quarantine restrictions. The Ceylon authorities, in their anxiety to keep the island free from disease, impose these humiliating restrictions on Indian passengers. Ceylon is apparently considered by the overzealous authorities as immune from all ailments which human flesh is heir to. But their idea of the celestial nature of Ceylon must have received a rude shock when the island had a visitation of plague, in 1910 or 1911, when unfortunately the plague spread to Tuticorin.

IS QUARANTINE NECESSARY ?

The main question for Indian politicians to consider in connection with this matter is how far the quarantine restrictions are necessary.

Days there were in this country when people coming from plague-infected areas were kept under quarantine for ten days, and this was superseded by the system of issuing passports by which passengers from infected areas had to report themselves for a certain number of days before the plague authorities; and even this system has now given place to what is called the notification system by which a passenger coming from an infected area has to notify to the plague authorities if any case of illness occurs in his family. But the Ceylon authorities are imposing quarantine restrictions not only in connection with plague, but also in connection with cholera, small-pox, and even fever, and they regard the whole of India as being practically infected, with the one or the other of these diseases. Medical experts in India, after bestowing great thought and medical knowledge on the necessity for imposing quarantine restrictions on people coming from plague-infected areas, came to the conclusion that no quarantine was necessary; and if this is the case with regard to plague, it applies *a fortiori* to the imposition of quarantine restrictions in connection with small-pox or fever. If medical experts say that no quarantine restrictions are necessary, what right have the Ceylon Government to impose restrictions on all Indian passengers proceeding from India to Ceylon? If no quarantine is necessary, then all the rules regarding quarantine restrictions must go. But if the Ceylon Government are superior to all the medical opinion in the world, and think that quarantine regulations are necessary for the purpose of maintaining the health of the Island, and if there is no power on earth to bring them to look at things from the common sense point of view, then the quarantine restrictions should be so worked as not to impose racial disabilities or as to cause the minimum of inconvenience. The quarantine rules, if they are to be acted up to according to their spirit, impose no such racial distinctions. Such distinctions are the work of the Medical Officer at Mandapam representing the all-powerful Ceylon Government. If the Ceylon Government are determined to carry out their quarantine restrictions at Mandapam, then I would suggest that an Indian member of the Indian Medical Service who has a thorough knowledge of Indian habits and customs may be placed at the disposal of the Ceylon Government for the purpose of carrying out quarantine restrictions at Mandapam. If this were done, he would at least take care that Indians are treated as self-respecting persons and that no distinction is shown between Europeans and Eurasians on the one hand and Indians on the other.

REPRISALS NECESSARY.

If the Ceylon Government refuse to withdraw the quarantine restrictions or to impose the deposit system on all passengers alike, then the

only remedy that is left for Indian leaders is to advocate retaliatory measures. They should introduce a Bill in the Legislative Council imposing similar restrictions at Talai Mannar or at Colombo on all passengers coming from Ceylon to India; and they should also take steps to prevent the emigration of thousands of coolies who go to Ceylon to enrich that island, until the system under which Indian passengers are so ignominiously treated is withdrawn or put an end to. If Indian leaders do not look into this matter, they are not worthy of the position they hold as leaders of Indian public opinion. But I am sure that our leaders are imbued with the same sense of dignity and self-respect as the average Indian is, and will feel, as much as an Indian passenger proceeding to Ceylon, the indignity imposed by the Ceylon Government on the latter.

From the "Hindu,"

May 29th, 1916.

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

QUARANTINE REGULATIONS.

The Mandapam Camp.

As one anxious to see in person how our own countrymen, whether passengers or coolies to Ceylon, are subjected to humiliation, hardship and inconvenience in our own midst at Mandapam by the Ceylon Government, of which so much has been said in the Legislative Council and Conferences in this Presidency, I took a note of introduction from a European friend of mine, to Mr. Gordon Cran, the Superintendent of the Emigration camp at Mandapam, and visited the camp on the morning of the 21st instant, after a busy week of Conferences at Madura. Mr. Cran gave me a kind reception and took me round the temporary camp which he said is roughly $57\frac{1}{2}$ acres.

Very elaborate arrangements have been made for the stay of passengers and coolies there for full six days excluding the day of arrival and the day of departure. There are 17 sheds for coolies and 8 for passengers. Each shed measures 100×25 feet and is intended to accommodate 160 persons. Each shed has a separate enclosure, has a tap for drinking water and a well for bathing and washing purposes. Drinking-water is pumped from a well at Mandapam Railway Station to a reservoir in the

camp and thence distributed by means of pipes. Messrs. Spencer and Co., are the caterers. They have entered into a contract directly with the Ceylon Government and they recover the feeding expenses of coolies from that Government. Passengers meet their own feeding charges. There are several rates of feeding charges ranging from $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas a meal to 6 annas a meal. Coolies are served with a meal of the lowest rate. A cooly, he or she, comes to the verandah from the body of the shed with a vessel. One man puts into the vessel a certain amount of cooked rice, another man pours on the rice some *sambhar* (soup with dhol), and a third man pours over the *sambhar* some *milagutanni* (pepper water). There is no curry, no ghee, no buttermilk. The cooly takes the mixture to a corner and eats it, and if more food is wanted it is given. I had the curiosity to ask some of the coolies if they were satisfied with the feeding arrangements. Some complained of little pieces of stone in the rice and others complained that they were served with rice, soup and pepper water, all in one dish. Mr. Cran who knows Tamil well and heard the complaints in person told me that such complaints had never before been brought to his notice and that he would take immediate steps to set matters right.

Passing on to another shed I asked a cooly boy of 15 why he was going to Ceylon, where he came from, whether he had parents, and so on. Everytime I put him a question, he turned to the Kanganis for the answer. I asked the Kanganis to keep aloof from us and leave alone the boy to answer my questions. The boy said after some hesitation he had his parents and elder brothers, his parents had incurred debts and sent him down there to go to Ceylon and save money by cooly labour to clear their debts. "Why did the parents send you (a boy of 15) instead of your elder brothers who will be able to do better work and earn] more wages?" I asked. "I do not know," he said. Passing on to another shed I met a girl of 12 who told me that she was going to Ceylon with her uncle (mother's brother) to work in the plantations and to return to India after a year or two. Will any Indian parent, however poor he may be, willingly send his daughter of such an age away from his home with the so-called uncle to earn her livelihood in a foreign place? That was a case worth enquiry. Mr. Cran narrated instances of clear fraud in which Kanganis had been severely dealt with, and said that there were cases in which detection of fraud was well-nigh impossible.

As regards passengers, they are given three-anna meals, four-anna meals and six-anna meals according to their wishes. The Brahmin meal (six annas) consists of dhol, rice, curry, ghee, *sambhar*, pepper water and butter-milk. Third class passengers, like coolies, are huddled together

without distinction of sex, caste or creed, in separate sheds according to the dates of their arrival. First and second class passengers are given the freedom of making their own lodging and boarding arrangements outside the camp. There are arrival sheds and departure sheds, as well as sheds for the detention of passengers for six days, the period fixed for observation, according to quarantine regulations of the Ceylon Government.

I was then taken round the kitchen room, the cooling shed, the Medical Officer's office and the Superintendent's office. We then waited for the trolley to go and inspect the construction of the permanent camp, west of Mandapam Railway Station, the estimated cost of which is Rs. 14 lakhs. Meanwhile we had a conversation on the object of the quarantine regulations, how they were worked, and so on. I was able to gather the following facts:—When the Boat Mail arrives at Mandapam, the Medical Officer of the camp enters the train and issues passes to all European and Eurasian first and second class passengers to Ceylon and their servants, Indians though they may be, and they proceed to Colombo unhindered. Indian first and second class passengers are detained and asked to pay the Medical Officer a visit at the quarantine camp next morning. The Medical Officer then directs them to stay there for a day or two either in the camp or outside it. He then permits them to proceed to Colombo on their depositing a security of Rs. 50 for their reporting themselves to the authorities at Colombo and placing themselves under observation for some days, while their servants are not permitted to accompany them but compelled to undergo quarantine at the Mandapam camp. Indian first and second class passengers do not receive even the sort of treatment given to the Indian butlers, boys and the menial servants of European and Eurasian first and second class passengers to Ceylon. Why are these restrictions and these invidious distinctions made? It is stated that the quarantine regulations were framed by the Ceylon Government and are enforced in this land of ours to prevent plague, cholera, small-pox and other epidemic diseases from entering the soil of Ceylon which is supposed to be free from such diseases. Reading the Rules put up in Railway waiting-rooms, and Railway carriages, one has naturally to interpret that European first and second class passengers alone will be allowed a through pass. Rule 3 runs as follows:—

“First and second class passengers will be required to undergo quarantine ‘if from infected areas’ unless they can satisfy the Medical Officer that they have been under surveillance for the previous seven days and have not been exposed to infection subsequently, in which case they may, at his discretion, be allowed a pass on proof of deposit of

Rs. 50 with the Madura Company or other authorised Agent or the Chairman of the Plague committee, Colombo, and signing a bond promising to submit themselves to surveillance for such period as may be ordered."

What is the definition of the term "Infected areas"? I was told that it meant any place infected by plague, cholera, small-pox or even fever, and that practically all stations in India are considered by the Ceylon Government infected areas. If so, why are not European and Eurasian passengers required to undergo quarantine, and why are they issued a through pass;—not only they, but their butlers and chokras selected from the lowest class of Indians? Again, the Medical Officer is given a discretion to pass first and second class passengers to Colombo on depositing a security of Rs. 50 and signing a bond as aforesaid, provided they satisfy him that they have been under surveillance for the previous seven days and have not been exposed to infection subsequently. This rule is enforced only in the case of Indian passengers. Even men who conduct business in Ceylon and keep shops are required to deposit the security of Rs. 50. Further, third class passengers, like coolies, are subjected to the humiliation of a rubber stamp mark on their fore-arm for the purpose of identification, before their departure for Ceylon. Why are not Europeans subjected to quarantine restrictions? I was told that Europeans are not so susceptible to disease as Indians. I do not for a moment believe it. But what about their servants who are Indians? No answer could be got for this question. The distinction is unwarranted and needs no further comment.

Medical opinion in India is that quarantine restrictions are unnecessary to prevent plague and other epidemic diseases. Medical opinion in Ceylon seems to be contrary to the medical opinion in India. Let it be so. If Ceylon is a land of bliss where every precaution is taken for the prevention of epidemic diseases, what was the cause of the visitation of plague in the Island five years ago which gradually spread to Tuticorin?

Quarantine regulations are first of all unnecessary and they ought not to be allowed to be enforced at Mandapam in British India. If the Ceylon Government wished to continue the imposition of such restrictions, let them do so in their own island, say at Talai Mannar or Colombo. As a retaliatory measure, may not the Indian Government impose such restrictions on all persons coming from Ceylon and landing at Danushkodi or Tuticorin? They may also prevent the emigration of a large number of coolies to Ceylon at an average rate of 500 a day. Indian

leaders of public opinion should move the Government in the matter to bring about a satisfactory state of things.

From the "Indian Patriot,"

May 30th, 1916.

EDITORIAL.

THE MANDAPAM SCANDAL.

It is a pity that as yet no effective steps have been taken by the Government of Madras to bring the Government of Ceylon to its senses. The meaningless atrocity still continues day after day upon the Indian passenger. The colour bar, which is the most fertile source of deep discontent and indignation, is fully at work here. Europeans and Anglo-Indians have no worry at all, but Indians, as Indians, are subjective to cruel difficulties. Husbands are separated from wives, parents from children;—there is, however, one redeeming feature, that the husband, separated from the wife, can keep her company by foregoing his journey to Ceylon. If it should be laid down that whosoever is found, according to the discretion of the medical man, to deserve to be placed in the quarantine, must be so placed, whether he goes to Ceylon or not, then the husband must be separated for six days from the wife. We have repeatedly drawn attention to the absolutely meaningless character of the rules. The Indian servant of the European first class passenger is exempt from quarantine, but the first class Indian passenger is not exempt. And what is the quarantine for? Not for plague, not for small-pox, but for any disease. Any man might be deemed to have come from an infected area, for we suppose there is no place under the sun where fevers or sore throats are not prevalent at one time of the year or another. To-day little Ceylon imposes such cruel restrictions upon Indian citizens, and we are putting up with it. Is this not a scandal? We insist that there shall be no colour distinctions in quarantine regulations. Subject the European to the same treatment as the Indians, and in a minute the entire situation will change, and the quarantine restriction will disappear, for the Europeans will not subject themselves to this treatment for a minute. The Indian is ignorant and is a dumb animal. An Indian visitor, writing to the *Madras Times*, describes how the males and females, boys and girls, are promiscuously mingled—the same complaint that an eye-witness made in these columns about the free emigration depots.

And what strikes us as particularly atrocious is the restriction on the movement of the coolies. They are not allowed to go out of a certain area, enclosed by wire fences. They are, in short, prisoners, for they have a uniform dress given by the emigration authorities, a tin plate ticket for food, and they have no freedom of movement. We tolerate this treatment of our men by the Ceylon Government. The Madras Government have not yet made a move. The situation is deplorable.

From the "Madras Times,"

June 4th, 1916,

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE COUNCILLOR AND THE "CHOKRA."

The *Ceylon Observer*, after reviewing a recent contribution to the *Madras Times* by an "Indian Visitor" on the subject of the troublesome quarantine regulations at Mandapam, comments that it is clear that the regulations are exceedingly irksome, and that it would be "only fair that some inquiry should be conducted by the Ceylon Government to prove whether they are necessary or advisable, or merely dogmatic." We understand that the unreasonable differentiation of the regulations is resented even more than the irksomeness of the regulations is complained of. Any one with a European name who is travelling first-class is allowed to go straight through to Colombo, and also his servants in the third; but any Indian who is travelling first-class must get down with the coolies, and must stay for a day at the camp before he is allowed to proceed, and his servants must stay the full quarantine term of six days. This, of course, leads to strange anomalies. Mr. Langham (*né* Lingam), who lives in a backstreet in Georgetown, and who is travelling second-class, can go straight on, and can take his dirtily-clad boy along with him; but the Hon'ble Mr. Ramaswami, who lives in a mansion in Egmore, and who is travelling first-class, must get out of the train with the crowd, and must stay the night, and must interview the medical officer at the camp the next morning, when he may hope to be allowed to proceed, leaving his high-caste servants, however, behind him for five more days. Distinctions such as these must necessarily be irritating. There might have been more reason for such a differentiation between "European" and Indian in bygone days. In bygone days

Lingam had not learned the trick of styling himself Langham, and it was not likely that any professing European would be a burlesque. The Hon'ble Mr. Ramaswami, moreover, didn't live in a mansion in Egmore, but in a back street in a crowded part of the city, where disease might be raging. But in the Indian gentleman's household to-day, even if hygienic arrangements are not always in strict accordance with health-department ideas, precautions against any infectious disease such as plague are wont to be particularly strict. That plague precautions in Ceylon should make it necessary for the Hon'ble Mr. Ramaswami to be detained, while they permit Mr. Langham's "chokra" to go straight through, is unmistakably ridiculous, and certainly gives room for resentment. The Madras Government is not of course in any way responsible for the regulations, which are solely the work of the Government of Ceylon; and our Ceylon contemporary's support of our contributor's suggestion that the Ceylon Government should see if there is not room for revision, is undoubtedly reasonable.

From the "Hindu,"

November 14th, 1916.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CEYLON QUARANTINE REGULATIONS.

To the Editor of the "Hindu."

Sir,—I passed through Mandapam recently. I am glad to say that the conditions are now somewhat better. A difference is made as well between Europeans and Indians, as between Europeans and Indians. All are not treated alike. Till of late, most of the Indian passengers were detained at Mandapam for seven days. Now, a few are passed at once, many the next day, and some after seven days' detention as before. Why detention at all? I cannot understand the obstinacy of the Ceylon Government. This important point was fully discussed in my previous articles, and the practice has been fully shewn to be futile from a sanitary point of view, not to mention the very great inconvenience to passengers, and the outrage upon national self-respect. The cry of the public is that the ridiculous and absurd system of detaining passengers at Mandapam should be done away with altogether. This is the main point. Next comes the notorious depositing system. The deposit of

Rs. 50, the Medical Officer at Mandapam told me, is not absolutely required of all, and the commission of one rupee is not charged now. Ever since the commission of one rupee has been removed, I find the Quarantine Office at Mandapam very often declines to accept the deposit. Consequently, the passengers have to write to Colombo and wait till they procure a receipt for their deposit from Colombo, or they have to buy a deposit receipt for about seven rupees from the Marikkar's son who has already placed large deposits. In the latter case the passengers do not place Rs. 50 as deposit but merely pay a premium of about seven rupees and obtain a deposit receipt. On coming to Colombo I learnt that of late in Colombo they require a personal security instead of cash. The public find this mitigation of the rule much more irksome. A very responsible representative has to go in person at certain hours to the Assistant to the Chairman, Plague Committee, and has to answer all sorts of irrelevant and unnecessary questions, such as, why is he coming to Ceylon? On what business? Who is managing that business now? Why does he come when his brother-in-law is here? Has he come here before? What are you? &c., &c. I am surprised that a highly paid civilian has time to waste in this lavish fashion. Sometimes, the permit is not given the same day. The applicant is asked to call for it the next day. The next day he does not go, fearing further interrogation. Quite recently, one Mr. S———C asked for 7 permits. The poor soul could not stand the cross-examination. He was asked to call the next day. He did not go personally. However, with great difficulty he managed to get only four permits, instead of seven. In some instances permits are even totally refused. I know in one instance the party had to engage a Proctor before he could get one. It would be most absurd to require a passenger to have anything to do in Ceylon before he sets foot on her soil. What about one who has no influence in Ceylon? He must be passed at Mandapam somehow. So, let others also, who may have influence in Ceylon, be treated likewise. Why should "influence" be such a mighty factor in such a small matter as crossing over from India to Ceylon? At Mandapam, Indians, exempted from deposits, have to execute bonds engaging to report themselves in Ceylon for a certain period, and to submit to vaccination by the Medical Officer in Ceylon, if so required, and at such time as may be appointed. Europeans go scot-free and have to report only in case of illness. Whereas, Indians have to report whether ill or not. Why this distinction? It is this distinction that vexes and annoys self-respecting Indians.

"Finger-print" is required of those who go to report to the Port Surgeon in Ceylon. Reason for the immediate abolition of this harsh practice it is needless to give here. The recollection of how the practice

was resented by the Indians in the Transvaal ought to suffice. The Indian Government must lead the way in teaching the Colony to reject these unwise and thoughtless methods so apt to be adopted in a hurry and without sufficient knowledge and consideration.

I suppose the depositing of money is practically abolished. If not, it must be abolished at once. The so-called mitigated practice of requiring a personal security in Ceylon should also be abolished with the least possible delay. The execution of a bond at Mandapam by the passenger 'himself' may stand in its place. But the rule must be enforced without any distinction of race or creed. It would be foolish to expect the people of to-day to tolerate any sort of distinction.

To come to vaccination. Formerly, passengers were vaccinated each time they crossed over from Mandapam, even when one happened to cross over twelve times in a year. Now, the Medical Officer told me, they intended vaccinating after the lapse of three or four years. Why does not the Ceylon Government follow India and do away with revaccination altogether? Is the Ceylon Government not aware that vaccination itself is still on its trial?

Turning to disinfection of clothes. Only the clothes of those who are detained at Mandapam are disinfected. So, if passengers are not detained, there will be an end of this nuisance.

A word about the monopoly of catering to poor coolies, enjoyed by Messrs. Spencer and Co. If there were other hotels as well, any cooly not content with one may have the choice of going to another. Therefore, permission should be given to open more hotels.

Is Quarantine necessary? The main question is how far the Quarantine Restrictions are necessary. It seems that the doctrine of Quarantine was invented by people who did not know how to keep their own houses in order, and that in no other part of this world does Quarantine exist, at least in the manner that it is enforced in Ceylon. When medical experts in India, after much discussion have come to the conclusion that Quarantine Restrictions on people coming from plague-infected areas are unnecessary, why should the Madras Government allow the Ceylon Government to impose any Quarantine Restrictions on Indian passengers?

One can unhesitatingly say that the Ceylon Government has no right to impose Quarantine on Indian passengers proceeding from India to Ceylon, and that the present regulations need not mending but ending. They should be done away with altogether, and the Madras Notification System introduced.

In conclusion, I regret that our Madras Government takes such a long time to remedy an evil which to the Indian public is fraught with such trouble, annoyance and loss, and which has such a disastrous effect upon their feeling of self-respect. The removal of this evil is a matter of urgency, and the Madras Government must be working with very slow-going machinery if it fails to arrive at a definite and satisfactory conclusion with the Ceylon Government within the next few months.

Colombo, }
November 11. }

KARUMUTTU THIAGARAJA.

From the "Indian Patriot,"

EDITORIAL.

A TERRIBLE SCANDAL.

The hardships to which Indians bound for Ceylon are subjected at Mandapam have been continuing day to day, in spite of the representation made to the Madras Government. The experiences that we published last Tuesday from a traveller come to remind the public of the perpetuation of these meaningless atrocities upon the helpless people of this presidency. It is a pity that in a civilized day, when the world is at war for what is called the mastery of righteousness over savagery, we should tolerate at our threshold the atrocities of the free emigration depôt or the Mandapam Quarantine Rules. The Government is helpless, public opinion is helpless, except for a few articles in the newspapers and a resolution in the Legislative Council. The people continue to be treated as cattle—and we use this word in its liberal sense. We do not at all exaggerate when we say that they are treated as cattle. Driven into the camp, their clothes torn from them for disinfection, compelled to eat the food served, and vaccinated, the third-class passenger is handled as a cow or a goat. We now understand that a second-class passenger, if he is an Indian, is not free from this valley of the shadow of death. He has also to subject himself to the process of disinfection by which the Ceylon Government hopes to keep back diseases. Common sense revolts against this process. The white skin is considered to be immune from disease, for the European is freed from all worries. The Indian, if he can deposit fifty rupees, is also considered to be immune, for he is permitted to go to Ceylon. Is this not, we ask, a

scandal? And how long, even after the attention of the Government has been drawn to the subject, should this continue? If we can bring South Africa to its sense, can we not ask little Ceylon to be more reasonable? We feel indignant, indeed, that the helpless people of South India should be subjected to these annoyances—we may add, positive dangers, for the food supplied at the Quarantine affects the human bowels. Only a helpless people like us would submit to such harassments. We bow our head to the inevitable without knowing that we ourselves make inevitable out of avoidables. Neither science nor common sense demands the perpetuation of the savagery on Indian passengers, at Mandapam. And yet this has been continued in the teeth of opposition. Government correspond, educated men gnash their teeth and protest, but the poor people submit themselves to be treated, in the name of the Circular, just as the quarantine authorities like. How long, we ask, is this to continue?

From the "Ceylon Independent,"

December 15th, 1916.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CEYLON QUARANTINE REGULATIONS.

Sir,—It is a great pity that the results of the representations by the Government of Madras to the Government of Ceylon are so disappointing. I quote the Madras Government's answers to interpellations:—

(1) "The stamping of passengers for purposes of identification will continue only until the completion of the permanent camp at the beginning of next year, when other arrangements will be made."

It is strange the Madras Government allowed stamping till now and is going to allow it for sometime longer. When Sir West Ridgeway visited Tattaparai Cooly Camp and learned that third-class passengers were stamped on their wrist with violet ink, he asked the Ceylon Medical Officer on the spot:—

"But is not that an assault in law?"

"Technically, it is, sir, but—" answered the Medical Officer with an apologetic smile.

Sir West allowed the practice subject to objection. The objections were always there, but no one voiced them in print. It is an unlawful

outrage on Indian passengers, and seemingly the Madras Government is unable to prevent it. The "other arrangements" after the completion of the permanent camp, will, I suppose, be the imprisonment—they call it detention—of passengers in the camp. Will the Government of Madras agree to that?

(2) "Certificate of good health and freedom from infection will be accepted by the Ceylon authorities for passengers of all classes in lieu of quarantine. District Medical and Sanitary Officers are being authorised to grant the certificates on payment of a fee of Rs. 5 for an individual and Rs. 8 for family."

There is exquisite irony in this "amendment." Is it not folly to require certificates of "good health," when there are two qualified doctors at Mandapam to examine passengers? The certificate for an individual, in ordinary circumstances, including the middle-men's fees, would cost about Rs. 10. It may sometimes go up to Rs. 20 or 30. Why put passengers to any loss unnecessarily? Can the third-class passengers afford even Rs. 5? The Ceylon Government has seen the injustice of making money by way of "deposit commission and duty," and the turn of the Madras Government has now come. A charge of Rs. 5 for an individual for a certificate of good health and freedom from infection!—this is the net result of the prolonged agitation. Again, passengers from the interior have to come to the town where the District Medical and Sanitary Officers reside. What is to be done if any infectious diseases prevail in that particular town? There is another inconvenience. Passengers under the circumstances have necessarily to take a particular route even when there may be other routes more convenient.

(3) "Re-vaccination is not now insisted on of persons previously vaccinated in the camp, of whose names a register is maintained. In other cases proofs of previous vaccination are scrutinised, and if found satisfactory, re-vaccination is dispensed with."

I do not think there is a regular registration of persons previously vaccinated. Even if there is, the rule would be very difficult to observe. It is all very well to say when "previous vaccination is scrutinised, and if found satisfactory, re-vaccination is dispensed with." But, so late as two weeks ago, passengers having very clear marks of previous vaccination were re-vaccinated. They may come under the pretence of not "found satisfactory." Such vague and elastic expressions should therefore be done away with.

(4) "The stamp duty of Re. 1 is not levied; a deposit as a rule will not be demanded."

The only real result of the agitation is the removal of the levy for "stamp and duty" which varied from Rs. 2 to 4. "A deposit as a rule will not be demanded" gives no assurance. Why not, clearly say whether the deposit is abolished or not? I suppose, however, the depositing of money is practically abolished, and for it there is substituted personal security. Thus a bad matter is rendered worse.

(5) "The Ceylon Government have agreed to the appointment of the following Officers of this Government as ex-officio visitors to their camp :—

The Surgeon-General.

The Inspector-General of Police.

The District Magistrate, Ramnad.

The Sanitary Commissioner.

The Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Trichinopoly.

The Superintendent of Police, Ramnad.

The District Medical and Sanitary Officer, Ramnad.

The Sub Divisional Magistrate, Ramnad.

An Officer who may be specially deputed by the Madras Government."

The Ceylon Government did not agree to include any non-official, I assume !

I cannot imagine why the Madras Government could not lay the correspondence on the table.

I am afraid the Madras Government either do not thoroughly understand the situation or is lacking in sympathy with the public, or is incapable. The evils that exist now are (1) Detention at Mandapam, (2) Permits, (3) Re-vaccination, (4) Disinfection of clothes, and (5) The monopoly of catering for coolies. All these should be done away with altogether, and nothing more severe than the Madras Notification System introduced instead. The failure of the Madras Government, after a discussion of two years with the Ceylon Government to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion, leaves little hope of the Madras Government being able to do anything of real avail in this matter. The non-official members are not responsible for this sorry outcome. They are in warm sympathy with the people's complaint. Let us therefore hope that the non-official members, instead of still trusting the Madras Government to do anything, will introduce and vote for a bill to retaliate and so bring the Ceylon Government to their senses. The Madras Government themselves have agreed to adopt reprisals "as a last resort when all negotiations had failed," to quote the words of Sir A. G. Cardew. Let us also hope that Mr. Srinivasa Sastrial or Mr. Sarma will take the matter up in the Viceroy's Council.

Colombo,

December 14.

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KARUMUTTU THIAGARAJA.

From the "Ceylon Independent,"

December 15th, 1916.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

CEYLON QUARANTINE REGULATIONS.

The letter on this subject to-day requires the immediate attention of the Government and the Principal Civil Medical Officer. The detention at Mandapam, the charge of a fee for each permit, and the ordeal of re-vaccination are some of the conditions that require to be abolished or modified. These harassing quarantine restrictions have been permitted to be in operation far too long, and it is certainly time that the Ceylon Government realised the necessity of removing the element of unnecessary harshness from the present regulations.

From the "Ceylonese,"

January 5th, 1917.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE EXPERIENCES OF A TRAVELLER FROM MANDAPAM TO JAFFNA.

Dear Sir,—I am a native of Jaffna but received my education at Madras, entered the service of the Travancore State, and retired from there on pension, after a service of over 30 years. The last place held by me in that State was that of the Excise Commissioner. I distributed the little property I had in Ceylon amongst my heirs, and have settled myself down at Siva Silem—an out-of-the-way village in the Tinnevely district, being congenial for the sort of life I have been leading since my retirement. All my relations are in Ceylon, and amongst them is an orphan grand-daughter. I am at present an Honorary Magistrate in the Tinnevely district.

2. Towards the latter part of the last month I received telegraphic advice that my grand-daughter referred to above was seriously ill and that my presence was necessary. Immediately I wrote to Colombo and through the good offices of my son, I secured three passes to enable myself and two others who had to accompany me to cross over to Ceylon.

As soon as I received these passes I set out for Palamcottā, where myself and the other two placed ourselves under the observation of the District Medical and Sanitary Officer of the place, and obtained his certificate on the evening of the 26th November last to the effect (1) that we are free from all infectious diseases, (2) that the district was equally so, (3) and that we had marks of vaccination on our person.

3. Armed with these documents, we entrained ourselves on the morning of the 27th and reached Mandapam between 3 and 4 P. M. on the same day.

WHEN THE TRAIN STOPPED,

two Medical Officers—one a Burger and the other a Ceylonese (a Sinhalese I am told)—appeared on the platform. The former, who was the senior and whose name was given as Dr. Fernando, went on examining the passengers from the engine end of the train, and the other, a dark man in European costume, was examining them from the other end. I must mention here that I was in full Indian dress, as I am averse to put on any other but the national costume as the most suitable to my colour and habits. One of my companions, who was with me in a second-class compartment, was similarly dressed. In the compartment next to ours was a European lady, and when the Junior Medical Officer met her he was all courtesy to her. But when he came to us his tone was changed, and he asked me in Tamil—"Where are you going?" I replied him in the same tongue. Then pointing out to my beddings and other articles that were with us, he asked in ungrammatical Tamil, meaning "What have you there?" On answering this question he said that I may continue my journey, but my companion should proceed to the camp with my things to be boiled there unless I chose to stay with him. On this I made an attempt to utter a few words in English and produced the documents in my possession. But he grew angry and said, "I know what I am about," and went away. Here it must be distinctly noted that he never examined our persons to find out if we were suffering from any disease, infectious or otherwise. As I was not prepared to leave behind my companions, and the articles which I stood in urgent need of, I got down from the train and went to the Senior Medical Officer and explained matters. He listened to me most patiently, examined all my documents and permitted all the three of us to continue our journey. Before dismissing us he handed

OVER A PRINTED NOTICE

to me calling upon us to report ourselves to the Chief Medical Officer of Jaffna daily for 16 days. The drift of the notice was that passengers

situated as I was, should daily present themselves before the Provincial Surgeon (as the Chief Medical Officer is called), and on failing to do so for 16 days, would be convicted of an offence punishable with a fine of Rs. 1,000 or one year's imprisonment. The Senior Medical Officer behaved himself as a gentleman and I did not find him dealing roughly with the passengers.

4. We continued our journey and reached Dhanuskodi at dusk. Immediately we got on board the steam launch, there began an inquisitorial procedure. The Customs officials appeared on the scene, and ransacked every blessed thing we carried with us. Amongst my luggage was a small wooden box, containing a number of small vessels of bell-metal (which may appear as trinkets in the eyes of a European), intended for my daily divine worship (*Siva Pooja*.) As the Customs officials were Sinhalese men they were not able to understand the explanation tendered by my companions in Tamil, and when I tried to explain to them in English, they were not able to catch that explanation too. They said that under the existing law they were bound to levy duty on those vessels and I paid it under protest. I was not at all concerned about the amount of the duty levied, but my sentiment revolts against such a procedure owing to the sanctity attached to them. In a Hindu household these articles

ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE COOKING

utensils. For, in the daily routine of the life of a Hindu, the use of these little vessels go first, before the use of the cooking utensils. I had also the latter and they were more valuable, but no duty was levied on them.

5. By the time we extricated ourselves from the clutches of the Customs officials the launch reached Talaimannar, where again there was another medical examination which was not in any way taxing as the one at Mandapam. From the launch we got into the train where there were no responsible Railway officials, but the porters were the masters of the situation and we had to obey their orders implicitly. The second-class passengers had only to occupy the seats pointed out by them, though those particular compartments were crowded, and others were empty. At Madawachi we had to alight from the train and wait for an hour and more for the train from Colombo. There was no waiting accommodation for passengers during their stay there as in the case of the Indian Railway, and the Railway

OFFICIALS WERE NOT SYMPATHETICALLY DISPOSED

towards them—particularly at a time when it was raining hard. The rest of the journey to Jaffna was uneventful, and we reached it on the morning of the 28th November.

6. Though we reached our destination, our troubles did not end here. I had not to tarry long by the sick-bed of my grandchild. The Sword of Damocles that was hanging over my head always reminded me of my would-be fate. We hurried on to the office of the Provincial Surgeon, where he performed his duty in a most unostentatious way, and asked me to report myself to him once a week, while the two men who accompanied me were called upon to do so daily. We carried out his instructions to the very letter for 16 days and obtained our discharge, but at the close of that period, under instructions from Mandapam, one of my companions was vaccinated,

THOUGH THERE WERE UNMISTAKABLE PROOFS

that he had undergone that process before this, and now he is labouring under its effects. The Provincial Surgeon and his staff were all kindness to us as in the case of the Senior Medical Officer at Mandapam. If the Junior Officer at that place had behaved himself as these gentlemen did, there would be no bitterness on the part of travellers.

7. I have stated these facts without any comment. But I must add one explanation for the benefit of those who are not conversant with Tamil with regard to the use of personal pronouns in the second person. That language is so full of honorary terms that a distinct word could be found to address persons in every station of life from the peasant to the prince. The pronoun *Nee* is the least respectable of them and it is generally employed in addressing people belonging to the cooly class, and Dr. Samarasingha (for that seems to be the name of the Junior Medical Officer at Mandapam) has made the choice of it to address persons of my stamp.

8. In conclusion I beg to say that in the midst of my domestic troubles I was not at all prepared to put on paper and place at the disposal of the Press my experiences of my late journey to Ceylon, but I had to yield to the request of numerous friends who thought that by my doing so I would be doing a service to the public at large.

Yours truly,

T. PONNAMBALAM PILLAI.

3rd January 1917.

From the "Ceylonese,"

January 5th, 1917.

EDITORIAL.

MANDAPAM MADNESS.

It has been our painful necessity to publish, from time to time, accounts of the way things are mismanaged at Mandapam, but apparently the authorities at that station are either not reached by newspapers or blissfully live above them. We address our present remarks, therefore, to the Principal Civil Medical Officer, who is directly responsible for the medical representation of this island at the emigration camp, and we trust he will do something to abate what is regarded on all hands as more than a mere inconvenience, what is becoming, in fact, a positive hardship on the travelling public, and is rapidly assuming the proportions of a grave public scandal. The establishment of the medical camp at Mandapam was chiefly for the purpose of detaining and disinfecting immigrant coolies before despatching them to their estates, and as the dissemination of dreadful diseases of all kinds was in former times associated in the popular mind with the import of Indian labour, there was no great objection on the part of the public to the precautions taken by the Government to keep this island free of the scourges which still periodically desolate India. But, with all their care, the trinity of the rat, the flea, and the germ somehow made its way into Ceylon, and from 1914 we have had not merely the bubonic type of the plague which rages in India, but the pneumonic and septicaemic varieties also, so that the Mandapam mission has proved an utter failure in keeping this country immune from the pestilences which prevail on the neighbouring continent.

But, in the same proportion in which it has failed to do what it was meant to do, the quarantine station has succeeded in making its service oppressive and objectionable, and the crossing over from India to Ceylon or from Ceylon to India, for those who do not sport a bleached complexion, has become an unspeakable nuisance and a nightmare. Although the camp was primarily intended for coolies, all Oriental people apparently are treated as coolies of sorts, while any kind of a livid foreigner in boots and breeches is said to be allowed a measure of liberty which, by implication, would suggest a craven regard for colourlessness and a certain cut of clothes, on the part of the Mandapam authorities. According to their strange gospel, the rat-flea would appear to share their partiality

for the white man, in any class of railway traffic, and their hostility to dark-skinned persons, in Eastern attire, whether in the saloon or in the coolie truck. And with such a well-sustained sympathy between themselves and their brother germs, they find it quite unnecessary to examine passengers in the ordinary way in which we are accustomed to see them examined; and are able to separate, as on the day of judgment, mankind into two simple divisions, the whites on the one hand, and the blacks on the other, and to let the right-hand division inherit the earth, and the left-hand throng gnash its teeth and sit in outer darkness at Mandapam for the expiration of its offence against officialdom, in wearing a dusky exterior.

The letter we publish to-day from the pen of Mr. T. PONNAMBALAM PILLAI, late of the Government of Travancore, who retired from service after holding the high positions of Conservator of Forests, Inspector General of Police, and Commissioner of Excise in that State, furnishes authoritative evidence of what we have all along protested against, namely, a race discrimination in the detention of passengers at Mandapam. The humour of it is that this odious distinction is not made by any European Officer whose unconscious blood may warm within him at the approach of a fellow-European, or chill at the appearance of a 'native'—with or without a high-explosive qualification. The selective process, it is reported, is carried out by coloured men, and, to our shame be it confessed, by Ceylonese doctors for the most part. Whether or not it is incumbent on these junior officers to make these improper differences in order to qualify for promotion, we cannot say; but under the mistaken belief, perhaps, that their policy finds acceptance in the eyes of their superiors, they seem to persist in the error of their ways.

The plague bacillus, we all along thought, was, like the law, no respecter of persons. Neither pelf, nor power, nor colour, class, or creed could, we imagined, withstand its attacks. But it would seem as though the medical mission at Mandapam piously believed that the rat-flea maliciously confined its attention to coloured folk, to men and women in Oriental garb, and to people whose means prevented their travelling in the first-class of the railway. If the rat-flea does not act in this queer way, is there any reason on earth for a medical officer's packing off to the camp third-class and other non-European passengers without any semblance of medical examination whatever? We understand there is no stethoscope or thermometer or any sort of instrument used to ascertain the state of a passenger's health; his pulse is not felt, chest tapped, eyelids drawn down, or tongue looked at; but, for all that, if his general aspect is brown or black, it appears to be suspected that beneath the

dark veneer there is a whole colony of disease germs—the plague, the pox, and all other pestilential microbes—and the victim is accordingly consigned to Mandapam to rot or to return after several days of unspeakable confinement.

To gain a glimpse of the camp-life at Mandapam one should refer to Mr. KARUMUTTU THIAGARAJA'S communications to this paper and to his pamphlet on the subject, written from personal knowledge and experience, which furnish a responsible statement of the condition of affairs. We are not, however, now concerned with any aspect of the case save that of the colour bar, which the medical camp at Mandapam is accused of trying to enforce. The question of compulsory re-vaccination deserves separate treatment, as also the question of the branding or stamping of third-class passengers. We have dealt with these matters oftentimes before, and shall continue to keep them before the public until there is some measure of relief secured. To-day we trust we have said enough to draw the attention of the authorities to the scandal of apparently penalising men for their complexion under the pretence of examining them for plague infection. We trust there will be a speedy end of this farce of "medical examination" at Mandapam if the motives, means, and measures are not clearly medical. It is obvious the restrictions at the quarantine station have not prevented the appearance of plague in Ceylon, and it seems like shutting the stable door after the steed has flown now to impose upon the travelling public harsh and oppressive restraints which have no preventive, hygienic, or sanitary value, now that the plague has become quite established here. We do not suggest for a moment that the camp should be closed merely because there is plague in Colombo. But if it is kept open, we beg the authorities not to make it an inferno for travellers whose only crime is the possession of a dark skin and the pursuit of 'native' modes of life. Let it be a quarantine station in name and effect, if it is to be a quarantine station at all, and not a parting of the ways for the East and the West.

From the "Ceylonese,"

March 2nd, 1917.

CORRESPONDENCE.

QUARANTINE RULES AND INDIAN IMMIGRANTS.

Sir,—About two days ago I met a merchant-acquaintance of mine who had just returned to Kegalla from his visit to India. He looked quite haggard. I asked him for the cause of his appearance. He said it was due to his detention for seven days at Quarantine Camp, Mandapam, for observation. He was taking what is called the Brahmin food, perhaps the best of its kind, paying for each meal 30 cents per time. He says the food smells badly, and the ghee and the butter-milk, which are served as savoury dishes, smell also in the same way. Then they sleep on the cemented floors of sheds which are quite open; and their sleep is not sound nor refreshing. Is it any wonder that the health of the individuals who are shut up there for seven days like a flock of sheep or a herd of cattle without good food and without the common comforts and conveniences of life is so seriously affected? Why are all these most unbearable worries and troubles given to travellers and the unnecessary labour to the Government officials at the Quarantine Camps when the same object of the prevention of diseases into Ceylon could be best effected by simple Medical Examinations at Thattapparai and at Mandapam, and then at Colombo and Polghawela, without the exaction of Rs. 50 as deposit and by observation at the end of the journey for the necessary period. This is what is being done in India. I trust Government will kindly consider my memorial sent to them recently on the subject and give effect to the above simple sanitary suggestions and come to the help of the poor travelling public.

Kegalla,

February, 26th, 1917. }

S. MICHAEL.

From the "Indian Patriot,"

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE CEYLON QUARANTINE

We published yesterday a letter from that indefatigable worker in the cause of the poor Indian passengers to Ceylon, Mr. Karumuthu Thiagaraja, who reverts to the brutalities of the quarantine and to the weakness of the Government of Madras in the handling of this problem which has created and does continue to create intense feeling. We draw the attention of the Government to the article, and appeal to them to deal with the Government of Ceylon with becoming roughness. Little Ceylon cannot be permitted to play Smutts with us at our very heels. Mr. Thiagaraja most effectively exposes the wordy explanations of a Government, which after all mean nothing else than a tacit acquiescence with the existing state of affairs. Nowhere does the Government betray stranger lack of knowledge than when it entrusts officials with the responsible work of administering rules, which, from their very nature, are ambiguous. Mr. Thiagaraja quotes one of these: "Proofs of previous vaccination are scrutinised, and if found satisfactory, re-vaccination is dispensed with." What is the benefit of this rule? Explicit examples are available even where vaccination marks were distinctly visible. The question for the authorities is, whether the poor people are subjected to suffering or not; and if they are, how their sufferings can be remedied. It is cruelly ridiculous to tell the poor third-class passenger that if he would provide himself with medical certificates, he could escape quarantine. We feel that the Madras Government have failed to adequately gauge popular feeling on this subject. We sincerely hope that the spirit of Lord Hardinge is still in our officials when they come to deal with questions affecting the self-respect of the people.

From the "Indian Patriot."

April 4th, 1917.

THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

QUARANTINE.

Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Ahmed Thambi Marakayer moved :—

XXV. This Council recommends to His Excellency the Governor-in-Council that necessary steps be taken with the Ceylon Government to withdraw the quarantine restrictions enforced at Mandapam on passengers proceeding to Ceylon.

He said that the Indian passengers were undergoing hardships. Medical certificates were ignored by the superintendent of the Mandapam camp, and the hon'ble member who took up the question before the plague officer, was directed to approach the Government. And so he was here. The Ceylon Government were anxious to keep back Indians, and unless the Government took steps, Indian passengers would have to undergo very serious hardships. The hon'ble member amended his resolution that the Ceylon Government be asked to adhere to an old G. O. which was more generous than a later G. O.

His Excellency said he could not understand the amendment. His Excellency suggested that the resolution might be withdrawn and the amended resolution might be brought up next session.

The Khan Bahadur explained that he wanted the withdrawal of all restrictions of quarantine. If the Government of Madras would move the Ceylon Government, he would press his resolution. But he doubted if Ceylon would agree to it. Therefore he suggested the amendment.

The Hon'ble Mr. Ramachandra Rao seconding pointed out that certificates were issued on payment of Rs. 5. This was considered a hardship to the poor. According to a new order the liberty of doctors to give certificates was restricted. Certificates for which money was paid were unceremoniously rejected by the Ceylon officer.

The Hon'ble Mr. Gilman said that the Ceylon Government had agreed to accept medical certificates in lieu of quarantine, but that one of our medical officers had abused the privilege and therefore the Ceylon Government refused to acknowledge the certificates. Therefore the medical officer was asked to give certificates only to those whom they knew personally. The Government could not do anything.

The Hon'ble Mr. Rama Iyengar said that the attitude of the Government was disappointing. Health certificates could not be given by a District Sanitary and Medical Officer unless he knew the man who wanted the certificate. Mr. Rama Iyengar questioned the expert opinion that would not allow certificates to be given to people they did not know. The Ceylon official would let any one he liked, and he did let people who got recommendation letters to him. But respectable people who failed to get such recommendations were disallowed. The Government's new theory of certificates only perpetuated the old grievances. There was no redress whatsoever.

As representing the Districts which sent the largest number of people across to Ceylon, he protested against the action of the Government in agreeing to the new certificates. The little that was given once had been taken away.

His Excellency said that the amendment had complicated matters. The Ceylon Government wanted to protect their country from infection. That Government had the right. The Madras Government had arranged for certificates, but owing to the action of a medical officer, the certificates had not the confidence of the Ceylon Government. That was the situation. The Madras Government at present had a bad case, and after sometime, would try to get more privileges for our people. The Ceylon Government had right over Ceylon. His Excellency appealed for a common sense view of the situation.

The Rajah of Ramnad asked whether the Madras Government had enquired into the necessity of quarantine for prevention of plague. He asked whether the Madras Government, instead of carrying out the instructions, had enquired into this question. Plague was brought from Ceylon more than taken from India to Ceylon.

His Excellency said that it was the question under consideration; but they cannot decide whether the Ceylon Government was right or wrong.

Mr. A. S. Krishna Rao suggested that certificates might be granted by Sub-Assistant Surgeons and Assistant Surgeons as they knew people more than the District Medical Officer knew people who went to Ceylon. Otherwise not many certificates would be issued. He hoped that the Madras Government would take all the steps necessary.

The Hon'ble Mr. Narasimha Iyer said that the impropriety of one of our subordinates ought not to stand in the way of good understanding between the two Governments. The present concession was as good as

not having at all. The Ceylon Government were taking precautions to keep back plague. The Government might not begin negotiation at once if the conduct of the medical officer had placed it in a false position.

The Khan Bahadur, in reply, said that the Ceylon Government had laid down rules in certificates which were impossible to observe. Under these rules no medical officer could give a certificate—and poor people who did not know the officers could have no hope of a certificate. He had moved that Civil Assistant Surgeons should be empowered to give certificates but the Government regretted it could not empower them. Plague was brought from Ceylon and he did not see why the Madras Government should not restrict passage from Ceylon to India. There were distinctions between Europeans and Indians, and he asked that this should be washed away. He suggested that two non-officials might be appointed as visitors to the quarantine camp.

The Hon'ble Mr. Gillman, replying, observed that he regretted the tone which the discussion had taken, and he regretted it might not be of any service to them in smoothening the difficulties which they had with the Ceylon Government on the subject. The Ceylon Government were quite in their rights in trying to prevent the bringing of foul disease from India to their island. It was because a very large part of the Presidency was plague-infected the Ceylon Government insisted upon certificates given by District Medical and Sanitary Officer, or some other responsible officer. In order to give certificates, the officer need not necessarily have a personal knowledge of the man. Moreover, as His Excellency had observed, this was not the time to ask Ceylon Government to modify the restrictions. They must keep quiet for the present. It would be most unwise to put forward any suggestion such as had been made by the Hon'ble Mr. A. S. Krishna Rao. Government were unable to accept the resolution.

When the resolution as amended was put to vote, the Hon'ble Mr. Richmond moved that the resolution might be postponed till six months. His Excellency remarked that the motion was "too late."

The resolution as amended, (*i.e.*) to adhere as far as possible to the old resolution, was put to vote and lost.

From the "Indian Patriot,"

Madras, April 5th, 1917.

EDITORIAL.

A SCANDAL.

We congratulate the Government on their having courageously taken the only course that, under the circumstances, they could have taken, to assuage in a way popular feeling and indignation against the revolting treatment of Indian passengers at the Mandapam. Indians complain that racial distinctions are shown, and this complaint exists there—the poorest European is expected to be free from any disease and, therefore, free to go on his way to Ceylon uninterrupted, but the wealthiest and the most respected Indian needs must be subjected to annoying interference. We hope the Government of Madras realise the effect of such a treatment in the minds of Indians, at present, and for all times to come. That the Madras Government did take some steps in the direction of smoothening the rigours of the quarantine was no great credit at all, for the steps, if any, were taken only after persistent agitation by the public. But the Government have not done much and little Ceylon is still at the old game of protecting the Island from disease—a determination in which Mr. Gillman has full sympathy. We are surprised that the Surgeon General should have invented a new form of medical certificate by which only those whom the District Medical Officer personally knew were entitled for the certificates. The Madras Government had, in the usual course of its business, accepted the new certificate. It struck no one that this new form of certificate was nothing but the denial of a certificate. The District Medical Officer must, we are afraid, be paid a pretty large sum of money before he can certify under these conditions.

The situation, at present, is the most unfortunate. The grievances remain, and they are genuine. The passengers suffer as before. Degrading racial differences are perpetrated with the same rigour now as before. There is now absolutely no improvement from the conditions against which the public protested. The gewgaw of a medical certificate has been shown to a troublesome child. Medical practitioners, qualified under the Medical Registration Act are not to certify passengers; even the certificate of a District Medical Officer had been discredited, and because the Ceylon Government found fault with one Doctor, the privilege of granting certificate has been withdrawn from all. Of course a novel and restricted form of certificate is invented which may, perhaps,

be available for the wealthy few, but from the popular view-point, the concession of medical certificate is now withdrawn. The Madras Government is helpless. One of their officers has misbehaved, and that has been enough for the Ceylon Government. We are surprised at the amount of official callousness displayed over this vital question. If a medical officer has misbehaved he might have been punished. But this novel procedure has been adopted, we are told, with the sanction of the Surgeon General. The question is whether the Madras Government is or is not satisfied that the passengers are put to sufferings, and whether such sufferings cannot be remedied? Does science demand such quarantine? The Hon'ble the Raja of Ramnad raised a very important question whether the Government of Madras were simply to carry on the instructions of the Ceylon Government. Plague is brought from Ceylon to India. Plague was said to be a rat-flea disease, not carried in the body of a person. Why should not our experts say so? Why should the Madras Government take lying such preposterous proposals, that because one medical officer has given a questionable certificate, all medical officers are unfit to issue such certificates. Mr. Gillman confers with His Excellency, and His Excellency comes amidst the non-official members with tears in his eyes:—"The Ceylon Government has so ruled. We cannot help it. Our officer has made a mistake. We are in an awkward predicament." We never knew the Government of Madras was so helpless.

The discussion has placed the Government in a very awkward state. Little Ceylon has been playing with us, and we are submitting to it. Why not retaliate? The Defence of India Act has arrested the flow of our labourers into Ceylon, and they formed the largest proportion of passengers. We can suggest a very effective method of bringing the Ceylon Government to its senses, but of course, we go on the assumption that our Government is as indignant as we are that this scandal should continue, and therefore, would not hesitate to stop every passenger, European or Indian, who comes from Ceylon to India, throw him into quarantine, pull off his clothes for disinfecting purposes, set a seal on his left hand, vaccinate him on the forehead, if necessary, and subject him for a week to the notorious Macnamara diet in the jail which was considered the most scientific. In one week the Ceylon Government order would be in the hands of Mr. Bedford that not only Sub-Assistant Surgeons but the *Vaidyans* and the *Hakims* can also issue certificates which will be honoured by the Ceylon official at Mandapam. We can even look forward to an expert rising in Ceylon to discover that small-pox, cholera and the plague are not contagious at all! It lies in our power to get expert opinion just as we want it. We must only move, and it will be a

great pity indeed if all that the Madras Government would do in the face of the mean advantage taken by Ceylon, is to beg non-officials to be patient. If we were not subjected to hardships at Mandapam, we would have laughed at this wrestling match between the giant and the pigmy. "One of your medical certificates is unreliable. So we suspect all your District Medical Officers." And the Surgeon-General in Madras, instead of growing indignant at the insult to his profession, puts up with it, because it comes from European officials in Ceylon and does not affect Europeans in India. This is a scandal.

From the "Ceylonese,"

May 1st, 1917.

THE CEYLON QUARANTINE REGULATIONS.

The following is copy of a letter addressed by Mr. Sam Manickam of Cuddalore to the Right Honourable Mr. Walter Long, Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Sir,—By last week's mail I forwarded to you as the highest controlling authority of British Colonies a booklet entitled "Sanitation and Medical Relief in India and Ceylon" for your kind consideration and favourable disposal. I now write this letter to you to invoke your assistance in mitigating the rigidity of the Ceylon Quarantine Regulations. The enclosed printed sheet explains that rigidity and is included in the pages of the booklet above referred to. After the outbreak of plague in India these Regulations were made more stringent than before. Passengers that travel from India to Ceylon are put to great worry and hardship. The trade and activities of the people are also paralysed because all the ports except Colombo are closed against passenger traffic from India. I do not think that a similar step will be taken in any other enlightened country in the world. In all enlightened countries each port is controlled by a Health Officer who examines all passengers carefully and safeguards Public Health. In India persons that travel from infected areas are directly examined and allowed to proceed to their destinations only leaving behind their names and addresses with the Health Officers. The present Health researches go to show that plague is communicated to man through rat-fleas. When plague broke out in Colombo four years ago it was not imported from India through human

agency. It was either indigenous or brought on by rat-fleas that found their way into the gunny bags that carried foodstuffs from India to Ceylon. Under this circumstance, why should persons of clean habits and sound health be prevented from directly passing over to Ceylon after they are examined? To speak of my own case, I arrived in Tuticorin on the Indian Coast on the 15th December 1916 directly from Cuddalore with the object of crossing over to Ceylon. After taking my lodgings with a Local Medical Officer I appeared before the Ceylon Health Officer and applied to him for a pass to enable me to go to Colombo by steamer. He knew that I was a Sanitary propagandist and a conspicuous member of society. Yet, he refused to give me the pass saying that as an Indian I must obtain a special permit from the Chairman of the Plague Committee in Ceylon by writing to him and that he could allow only Europeans to cross over freely and directly. I pray that you will be pleased to enquire into all the aspects of this question and to direct that the ports that are now closed may be opened for passenger traffic again under medical supervision and that all persons that travel from India to Ceylon may be treated in the same manner as travellers in India are treated by the Government of India only asking them to leave their names and addresses with the Health Officers. By so doing you will confer a great boon upon His Majesty's subjects that live in these parts who will not fail to duly appreciate the sympathy shown to them in this direction, and be grateful for all the good things they are now enjoying under British Rule.—I am, Sir, “Your Most Obedient Servant,”

SAM MANICKAM.

[The Colonial Office Reply.]

LONDON, 6th March, 1917.

Sir,—I am directed by Mr. Secretary Long to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th January, relative to the quarantine regulations in force in Ceylon, and to inform you that a copy of your letter is being sent to the Governor of Ceylon.—I am, Sir, “Your obedient Servant,”

G. GRINDER.

From the "Hindu,"

August 17th, 1917.

CORRESPONDENCE.

INDO-CEYLON PASSENGERS.

Mr. Karumuthu Thiagaraja writes from Athikkadu Thekkur, under date August 7, 1917:—

1. Quarantine.—The travelling public between India and Ceylon is put to a great deal of inconvenience and monetary loss by the enforcement of quarantine at Mandapam by the Ceylon Government. That is not a new matter. The question has been agitated since 1914 in the press, in public meetings and in Councils, without any real fruit. The long negotiations between the Government of Madras and that of Ceylon came to very little. The mountain has laboured and has brought forth a ridiculous mouse. This fact has been dealt with already and I do not propose to go into the details here. I refer to it again because the Ceylon Government has withdrawn even the little concession made, under the plea that a medical officer in India once abused his power. The Madras Government without protest agreed. We are not sorry to lose the so-called concessions as they would not help the ordinary public in any degree at all. We cannot but be surprised, however, at the reason the Ceylon Government gives for holding what little it had yielded before. I shall quote a few of the many cases ventilated in the Ceylon Press. The "Ceylon Morning Leader," in its editorial of July 11th, 1914, divulged the following serious facts:—

"Now come some instances which require the attention of the Government On June 25th last, Messrs. R. G. Perera and J. L. Perera came over from Tuticorin. They went to the Medical Officer to get the usual certificates, without which the Shipping Company issues no tickets of passages. They desired to travel by the second-class On arriving at the Doctor's office, however, the young men were told by the Medical Officer that he would not give the certificate unless they took first-class tickets. Two months ago, Mr. Simon Paiva came over and he had the same experience These people cannot understand the Medical Officer's interests in getting them to pay Rs. 21 for a first-class passage, when they can come over for Rs. 10-5-0 which is the second-class fare The Medical Officer is said to insist even upon servants who attended higher class passengers travelling by the second-class. A fortnight before Easter some five girls, including the children of Mr. and Mrs. M. G. Gomez of Negombo, came over by this route The Medical Officer insisted upon the girls as well as their attendants travelling by the second-class, each paying the second-class fare."

It is after this fashion that the Ceylon Medical Officer in charge of quarantine prevents the importation of foul diseases into Ceylon,

Again a letter appearing in the "Leader," in its edition of July 3rd 1914, from the pen of Mr. J. M. Hensman of Jaffna disclosed the following:—

"Here, however, is one that can be proved. One Nagamuttu, a native of Copay, Jaffna, came from Madras about a month or two ago. Arriving at Madura, he was told of the deposit of Rs. 50, without which he could not proceed to Jaffna. He is a cooly in Madras and could not dream of finding the money himself. He, therefore, went about among the few Jaffnese resident at Madura to raise a loan of Rs. 50. One of them informed him that 2 or 3 rupees properly applied at the right quarter at Mandapam would enable him to go to Jaffna without the payment of any deposit and "without the necessity of even reporting himself to a Medical Officer at Jaffna." He duly followed the advice. He came to Jaffna without any detention at Mandapam."

Is it not the clear obligation of a Government, thus openly challenged, to institute due and formal enquiries into the matter? But the Ceylon Government was silent and evidently did not think of abolishing quarantine on the ground of its officers being corrupt. When such corruption is rife among its own officials, the Ceylon Government is over-nice in respect of a single officer of the Madras Government who had overlooked a point in the regulations for issuing permits; and whilst swallowing a camel, strains at a gnat by forthwith withdrawing the little concessions previously conceded. Now will the Madras Government follow the lead given by the Ceylon Government, and take measures to obstruct the working out of the Ceylon Quarantine Regulation?

2. Passport.—The Government of India instead of relieving the poor passengers of the quarantine nuisance, have themselves begun to enforce new restrictions and have also asked the Ceylon Government to follow suit. A passport has of late become an absolute necessity and none except *bona fide* coolies and Mohammadan pilgrims can go to, or return from, Ceylon without it. This stringent regulation was enforced without any previous notification to the public. Needless to say that such methods of business put the public to great trouble. I know for certain that many on either side of Talaimannar were turned back by the Police for want of passports. Surely the passengers could not have dreamt of such regulations. It is a pity that things should be done in such a manner. Consider the upsetting of plans, and the expense of passengers thus turned back at the close of their journey, for no fault of their own. The common people feel keenly the enforcement of such rigid regulations without any notification whatever. If the authorities had issued a notice proclaiming the new regulations, they would have prevented a great deal of trouble to these passengers.

Now is it an easy affair to obtain a passport? First of all the application form should be obtained. Secondly, it must be filled in with the following descriptions of the applicant:—

"Age, profession, place and date of birth, height, forehead, eyes, nose, mouth, chin, colour of hair, complexion, face, any special peculiarities."

Thirdly, two photographs of the passenger should be forwarded with the application. If the applicant happens to be a villager, which is often the case, he must go to a town where a photograph can be taken. Fourthly, the application must be verified and recommended by a "Political Officer, Magistrate, Justice of the Peace, Police Officer not below the rank of a Superintendent, or Notary Public." So the applicant must hunt up and wait on one of these officers. Only a few influential men know the said officials personally. Therefore, a village munsiff has often to be taken to recommend or introduce the applicant to the particular officer. Fifthly, the fee of Re. 1 for issuing the passport should be deposited in the Treasury. After doing all this rather carefully the application can now be sent to the District Collector instead to the Madras Government as before for issuing the passport.

Thanks to the Government of India for having of late empowered the District Collector to issue passports. It will be a great relief to the passengers. It may save a long delay or a journey to Madras, as most of the passengers would have to go all the way to Madras to get their passports without delay. The public should feel grateful to the Government for realising the difficulties of the people and trying to meet them to some extent at least.

But why a passport at all for an Indian travelling between India and Ceylon? That is the real point. The sting of the scorpion is in the tail, and so the sting of the passport.

What does the Government gain from this annoying and circuitous procedure? This is probably a war measure intended to prevent enemies entering or leaving India. If so, cannot the Police in the train on either side, and in the boat, perform this function without troubling the public? Is it so difficult to distinguish Chettians, Tamils and Mohammadans, who are generally the passengers to Ceylon, from aliens?

Next what is the meaning of exempting Mohammadan pilgrims? Cannot an alien then escape under the guise of a Mohammadan pilgrim? What is the guarantee that every passport-less pilgrim is not an undesirable alien?

After all, what is it that makes India more distinct from Ceylon, than one Presidency from another Presidency, or one State from another? From south to north in India one can travel without a passport, but to cross over a little channel between India and Ceylon the poor traveller is required to possess one. Is this not strange? Is there any sense in this? Are not these restrictions preposterous? It is time that things were done a little more rationally. Why trouble people when there is no need?

From the "Indian Patriot,"

Madras, August 16th, 1917.

THE CEYLON SCANDAL.

We publish elsewhere a spirited exposure of the scandals surrounding travel between Ceylon and India from Mr. Karumuthu Thiagaraja, who has done much to make public opinion in India on the subject. The scandalous system of demanding passports, about which Mr. Thiagaraja writes with feeling, has ended, for a press communique from Simla informs us to-day that passengers between India and Ceylon need not provide themselves with passports. Mr. Thiagaraja's description of the passport must cause wonder that such stringent restrictions should ever have been enforced. To ask poor people to fill up forms, to provide themselves with photographs and wait at the door of high officials before they can cross the channel, was certainly harsh; it was, we do not hesitate to describe it, meaningless oppression. We are glad that it has been abolished; we look forward with hope to hear that the quarantine restrictions are abolished too. Mr. Thiagaraja has pointed out how the Government of Ceylon has been systematically ignoring serious complaints against its officers of corruption: and yet, because a doctor in Madras granted a questionable certificate, the Ceylon Government was overpowered with righteous moral indignation which resulted in a concession—medical certificate—being withdrawn. What about these exposures of the Ceylon Government? What about this doctor refusing to grant medical certificates to second-class passengers unless they purchased first-class tickets. What about the compulsion about servants being forced to travel second class? Does travelling first and second class act against contagious diseases? The revelations about corruption must make even a Turkish official blush. And yet the Government of Ceylon could pass for a sage, shocked because a doctor gave a worthless certificate and, therefore, insisting that the very systems of granting medical certificates shall cease. We wish the Government would do something to protect its prestige against such queer handling by the Government of Ceylon.

From the "Hindu,"

August 22nd, 1917.

CORRESPONDENCE.

INDO-CEYLON PASSENGERS.

Sir,—An air of disappointment has become widespread in this country on account of the grave scandal that exists in travelling between India and Ceylon. The annoyance caused to the Indian public who have to cross a small channel in going to Ceylon beggars description. It will be received with a sigh of relief that the Government has ordained that no passports are necessary for people travelling between India and Ceylon. We are grateful to the Government of India for doing away with passports. Mr. Karumuthu Thiagaraja's spirited letter depicts in a touching manner the worry and annoyance to which the Indian people are subjected to nearer home. It is an irony of fate that the powers-that-be in Ceylon have not thought it expedient to remove the disabilities under which the Indian travellers labour. The indignities heaped upon the Indian passengers are becoming intolerable. We hope that the Government of Ceylon would bestow a thought on this subject and redress the grievances of Indian public. By so doing they would be doing an act of bare justice. It is also hoped that the rigour of quarantine restrictions will also be relaxed. Things are coming to a head. Something must be done to avoid a crisis.

The thanks of the Indian public are due to Mr. Thiagaraja for speaking on behalf of them. His efforts, it is hoped, will be crowned with success. The Madras Government would in fairness to them take the matter up and see that justice is done to the Indian public.

W. S. NAIDU.

APPENDIX A.

Extracts from Resolutions passed by the Madras Provincial Conference.

(i) "That in view of the hardships experienced and invidious and offensive racial distinctions shown in the quarantine regulations imposed by the Ceylon Government on passengers that cross from India to Ceylon, the Conference is emphatically of opinion that the system of detaining only Indian passengers for seven days at Mandapam or Tuticorin should be abolished, as it compromises national self-respect and is futile from a sanitary point of view. That the rule requiring the deposit of Rs. 50 by every Indian passenger for a health certificate is iniquitous and is the cause of great worry, monetary loss and personal harassment, and should be repealed. That the practice of compulsory re-vaccination of Indian passengers is indefensible and should be abolished. That in case the Ceylon Government fail to accept the above proposals without undue delay, the recruitment of labour from India or Ceylon be prohibited after taking legal measures therefor, if necessary, and that the Indian Government should refuse to co-operate with the Ceylon Government in the enforcement of their quarantine regulations within Indian limits." (At the twenty-second session, held at Madura in May 1916.)

(ii) "This Conference requests the Government of Madras to take immediate steps for the Ceylon Quarantine Regulations being withdrawn". (At the twenty-third session, held at Cuddalore in May 1917.)

APPENDIX B.

The Assurance given by His Excellency the Governor of Madras.

The reply made by His Excellency the Governor of Madras to the Chettiers with regard to the Ceylon Quarantine Regulations, to which his attention was drawn in the Address presented by them (in September 1916), runs as follows :—

"In your Address you mention one question which is of special interest to you as a community, namely, the Ceylon Quarantine Regulations. This is a matter which has engaged our anxious attention. It is at present under further discussion with the Ceylon Government, and you will, therefore, not expect me to deal with it in detail. I sincerely trust, however, that we shall arrive at an agreement which, while securing to the Ceylon Government all that is necessary to safeguard the health of the people committed to its charge, will obviate all unnecessary interference with those whom business or employment takes to that island."

APPENDIX C.

CEYLON QUARANTINE REGULATIONS.

**As Amended after the Negotiations between the Madras
and the Ceylon Governments.**

1. No passenger is allowed to land at Talaimannar (Ceylon) without a health pass issued by the Quarantine Medical Officer, Mandapam.

2. Passengers will be granted a health pass by the Quarantine Medical Officer authorising them to land in Ceylon, provided he is satisfied that—

(a) they are healthy,

(b) they are not direct contacts of plague, cholera or small-pox,

(c) they hold a permit from the Chairman, Plague Committee, or from a District Sanitary and Medical Officer or can satisfy the Quarantine Medical Officer as to their place of residence in Ceylon, or that they are about to embark on a ship in Colombo.

3. Such passengers will be called upon to sign an undertaking to report themselves to the Port Surgeon, Colombo, or to the District Medical Officer of the district in Ceylon in which they are going to reside and to subject themselves to re-vaccination, if so required. Passengers not provided with a permit, or unable to satisfy the Quarantine Medical Officer as to their place of residence in Ceylon, may be granted a permit to land on making a deposit of Rs. 50 when signing the undertaking to comply with Ceylon Quarantine Regulations.

All other passengers will be detained for observation during five clear days.

4. All bedding or dirty linen and wearing apparel is liable to detention for purposes of disinfection.

5. Servants of upper class passengers accompanying their masters may be passed on the guarantee of their masters except in cases where the servant is to be left alone in Ceylon after the departure of his master. In such cases the servant will be detained.

Exceptions may, however, be made in special cases, *e.g.*, servants of sick persons, etc.

6. Steamer crews may be passed through direct in special carriages to be taken to the Quarantine Hulk in Colombo harbour, subject to disinfection and re-vaccination, if necessary.

Permits.

Permits will be issued free of charge by the Chairman, Plague Committee, Colombo, to any known resident of Ceylon or on the guarantee of any known resident.

Application for permits should be made on the form annexed.

FORM OF BOND.Plague Committee 18
(F4')

I request permission for $\frac{\text{myself}}{\text{the undernoted}}$ person to cross over from India to Ceylon without quarantine detention.

I guarantee that $\frac{\text{I}}{\text{he}}$ will abide by the regulations printed below.

I further guarantee to subject $\frac{\text{myself}}{\text{him}}$ to vaccination by the District Medical Officer in Ceylon if so required, at such time as may be appointed.

I further agree to forfeit Rs. 50 in the event of $\frac{\text{my}}{\text{his}}$ failure to observe the conditions of guarantee.

Signature.....

Address.....

Name of the permit-holder :

Occupation :

Address in Ceylon :

Probable length of stay in Ceylon (if less than one month):

Regulations Referred to.

Permit-holders are required to report to the District Medical Officer of their district in Ceylon for such period and at such intervals as may be directed.

N.B.—Failure to observe this rule renders the permit-holder liable to prosecution, in addition to the forfeiture of Rs. 50 by the guarantor.

Every passenger must forthwith report to the District Medical Officer any case of illness occurring to himself or any member of the household within one month of his arrival in Ceylon.

(Sd.) F. BOWES.

Chairman, Plague Committee.

APPENDIX D.

COLOMBO, 15TH NOVEMBER 1916.

His Excellency The Right Honourable

The Lord Pentland, P.C., G.C.I.E.,

Governor of Madras,

M A D R A S .

THROUGH MR. A. R. LOFTUS TOTTENHAM, M.A., I.C.S.,

District Collector, RAMNAD.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

Having had the honour of meeting you at the American Mission Hospital in Madura in 1913, of presenting an address on behalf of the Chettians at Tiruppur, and of being permitted an interview at Devakota, I do not introduce myself, but must beg to have this letter excused for the sake of the urgency of the matter I now venture to write about.

On passing through Mandapam recently I had an opportunity of seeing how matters stood in regard of the Quarantine Regulations. I have found that they are somewhat better. A difference is made not only between Europeans and Indians but also between Indians and Indians. All are not treated alike. The deposit is not required absolutely of all. Yet there do not seem to be any definite rules. The mitigated system of personal security for permits obtainable from the Chairman, Plague Committee, Colombo, is much more irksome.

With reference to the question in general, having agitated it for three years upon all occasions public and private, by correspondence and through the press, I beg leave to bring before you again the difficulty caused by the system of detention, deposit (now personal security), revaccination and disinfection. The main point of objection is the first, namely the detention, beside which the rest diminish in importance and are trifles, and I beg that after the lapse of such a long period of debate and suspense, an abolition of the present harsh regulations and the introduction of the Madras Notification System may be arrived at. If I refer to the detention again here, it is because the point was not emphasised in the Legislative Council.

Another evil is the monopoly enjoyed by Messrs. Spencer & Co.'s hotel, which coolies have to put up with even if it is not suitable. Were there hotels of Indian agents as well, there would be a choice, and a person not content with one might go to another.

With reference to the interview in Devakota above referred to, I have to make a correction in my statement. Upon enquiry I find there are 350 Chettian firms in Colombo alone, and 750 in all Ceylon; and about 25 per cent of the passengers for Ceylon are either Chettians or their dependants.

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I remain,

With all submission,

Your Excellency's most obedient servant,

(Sd.) KARUMUTTU THIAGARAJA.

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