



or of permanent huts or houses, you will pay special attention to providing a good drainage fall. There is no want of water at Port Blair; but it will generally have to be obtained from wells; and the absence of natural drainage by moving streams makes it necessary that this object should be kept in view.

12. The convicts should be organised in gangs of a convenient size, each under the superintendence of a Tindal appointed from among their number, and assisted by a convict peon or two. The duty of the Tindal would be to see that the convicts under him perform the daily task allotted to them, to receive the daily rations and regulate the mess, to bring to the notice of the Superintendent the good or ill conduct of the several convicts composing his gang, and generally to be responsible for their behaviour. In forming the gangs, men of the same religion may, as far as shall be otherwise convenient, be brought together; but a gang once formed must invariably mess together, and no objection to obey orders on the ground of caste is to be admitted.

13. The Superintendent should never leave the guard ship to go on shore without being accompanied by a sufficient guard. While the convicts are employed upon Chatham Island they should not have any weapons in their possession but those which they use in clearing the jungle. When they are located in the main land, it may be necessary to arm a limited number of them with muskets to keep off the savages.

14. It is not the intention of the Governor General in Council to propose that you should remain for any length of time in Port Blair. His Lordship in Council wishes you carefully to select an officer, in or out of the service of Government, in whom you can entirely confide, and to nominate him as Superintendent of the Settlement for the approval of the Government. With the assistance of this officer you are requested to organise the expedition for the purpose of establishing the Settlement, to entertain and arm a sufficient guard probably of European sailors trained to the use of fire-arms, to collect all the tools and materials you may think necessary for commencing operations, to lay in supplies of rice, wheat, ghee, salt, drugs, and other neces-



saries* sufficient for the supply of 1,000 convicts for three months, and to engage as many Burmese coolies (free or convict) as you may think necessary to enable you vigorously to commence and make good progress in clearing Chatham Island and erecting temporary lines before the prisoners begin to arrive from India. If the *Pluto* is not sufficiently large to accommodate the party or to convey all the stores, you can obtain from the Commissioner, or hire, a small sailing vessel for the purpose. A medical officer should accompany the expedition, and a native doctor to attend on the convicts.

* Firewood may be obtained in abundance on the spot. Tobacco should be prohibited, except as a medicine. Seeds and live-stock should be provided.

15. After you have put matters fairly in train, and thoroughly instructed the Superintendent in the system you determine to introduce, you will be at liberty to return to your duties at Moulmein and thereafter visit the Settlement at intervals: but upon this point you will receive instructions hereafter. The Superintendent will continue for the present entirely under your authority and control.

16. The Commissioner will be instructed to place the *Pluto* at your disposal for this service and to give you every aid in his power towards the furtherance of the important object in view. It is of the greatest moment that the expedition should proceed without delay as 218 convict mutineers from the Punjab will shortly leave Karachi in vessels which have been directed to proceed to Port Blair and will probably be there in a month or six weeks hence.

17. You are requested to submit without delay a sketch of the plan you propose to adopt and of the strength and cost of the establishment which you think it necessary to entertain. You will also report to the Public Works Department the arrangement you make for the conduct of your other duties during your temporary absence from Moulmein. While you are employed on this special undertaking, the Governor General in Council will allow you R300 a month as deputation in addition to your present pay and allowances.

18. A more elaborate expression of your views will be expected by the Governor General in Council immediately after your first return from the Settlement.



19. There remains one important point upon which, although it does not call for immediate action, it is necessary that you should be in possession of the views of the Governor General in Council.

20. Many hundred Mutineers and Rebels will before long be established at Port Blair. The congregation of so large a body of male convicts, not held under the strict discipline which can be enforced only within prison walls, is a gigantic evil. It is true that it is one which in some places has been submitted to from necessities arising out of the position or nature of the Penal Establishment, of the character of the convicts, or other causes. But this is not the case in the Andaman Islands. There is plenty of room for the wives and families of the prisoners. There is no free community to whom their presence can be objectionable. The character of very many of the convicts themselves will not be that of morally degraded criminals, but of grievous political offenders. There is no reason why the same wise consideration which requires that in the case of free emigrants to our colonies, the colony should receive a certain proportion of women as well as men, should not be kept in view in the present instance. You will, therefore, understand it to be the desire of the Governor General in Council that eventually the wives and children of some of the mutineers should follow them from India.

21. That they would do so at once, even if invited, is not likely; nor is it likely that the convicts would wish to be accompanied by them across the "black water": and the Governor General in Council has no intention of removing any of them forcibly at present. But it is very probable that with time, and if the permission to be joined by their wives and families be made a reward to prisoners for good behaviour, and limited to a certain number, and if those who deserve the indulgence be allowed to communicate with their homes, the repugnance may on each side cease to be felt.

22. You will then keep this object before you as an ultimate aim of the Government; not requiring any immediate measures, but to be worked out according to your judgment and the experience of those with whom you will have to deal.



No. 88, dated the 15th January 1858.

From—C. BEADON, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India,

To—Captain H. MAN, Executive Engineer and Superintendent of Convicts at Moulmein.

In continuation of my letter No. 87 of this date, I am directed to request that on your arrival at Port Blair you will hoist the British Flag and take formal possession of the group of Islands called the Andaman Islands, consisting of the Great and Little Andamans and all the Islands adjacent thereto, in the name of Her Majesty the Queen and the East India Company.

2. Although it is certain that formal possession of these islands was taken by the British Government in 1789, and that the sovereignty of them is legally vested in the East India Company in trust for the British Crown, yet as they were deserted in 1796, and have been only nominally in possession of the Government ever since, it is desirable, as a measure of precaution and to avoid the possibility of future doubt, that the right should be again asserted and recorded.

3. I am also directed to state that the Governor General in Council has been pleased to vest you with full judicial and executive authority throughout the Andaman Islands, and to appoint you to be a Commissioner therein under Acts No. XIV and XVII of 1857 for the trial of all persons charged with having committed within the said Islands any crime against the State, or any heinous crime whatever.

Extract from a Despatch from the Hon'ble the Court of Directors in the Political Department, No. 19 of 1858, dated the 18th May.

OUR GOVERNOR GENERAL OF INDIA IN COUNCIL.

Foreign Letter, dated 8th April,	No. 24, 1857.
" " " 2nd May,	" 33, 1857.
" " " 2nd May,	" 34, 1857.
" " " 9th September,	" 58, 1857.
Judicial " " 7th January,	" 2, 1858.
" " " 19th January,	" 3, 1858.

1. We now reply to your several letters noted in the margin, relating to the survey of the Andaman Islands.



2. On the receipt of our letter of the 1st of October 1856, directing you to despatch, at your earliest convenience, a steamer with a surveying party under competent directions for the exploration of the islands, the season had advanced too far to admit of preparations being made for the commencement of the proposed survey (there being no steamer then available for the purpose), but in the early part of the following cold season the importance of the Andaman Islands, as a convenient place for the reception of convicts, having, in the meanwhile, been greatly enhanced by the mutiny in the Bengal Army, you nominated on the 20th of November last, a Committee consisting of Doctors Mouat and Playfair of the Bengal Medical Establishment, and Lieutenant J. A. Heathcote of the Indian Navy, "to examine the shores of the Andaman Group of Islands, and select the best site, which could be found there, for the establishment of a penal settlement."

3. In accordance with instructions from your Government, the Committee proceeded to Moulmein on the 23rd of November, on board the Steam Frigate *Semiramis*, and on the 8th of December they again embarked at that place on board the *Pluto*, taking with them 12 Burmese convicts "accustomed to forests" and a guard of three convict peons; besides an officer and twenty European seamen from the crew of the *Semiramis*, to protect the exploring parties.

4. On the 11th of December, the *Pluto* anchored in Port Cornwallis, off the northern coast of Chatham Island, where a British Settlement had existed for some years towards the close of the last century, and had been finally abandoned in 1796, on account of its extreme unhealthiness. The Committee were anxious, as a preliminary to their investigations, to ascertain the causes of this reputed insalubrity, and they were not long left in doubt regarding them. "It appears," say the Committee, "to have been ill selected as a site for a settlement, two-thirds of its own shore being fringed with a dense belt of mangrove, and the prevailing winds during the greater part of the year, at its most unhealthy season, blowing over the swamp surrounding the island. Conditions more certainly calculated to secure the largest measure of unhealthiness, it would be difficult to find."



5. Having ascertained this fact, the Committee proceeded to make a general exploration of the Andaman Group, and eventually returned to Old Harbour, which, we apprehend, is on the south-eastern coast of the southernmost of the three islands known as the Great Andaman. This was the first place fixed upon for the original settlement, and successfully maintained by Lieutenant Blair, until, for the sake of better anchorage, the colony was removed to Port Cornwallis, which lies to the north-east of the islands. No inconvenience on the score of unhealthiness had been experienced by our first settlers in the more southern locality, and when the Committee proceeded to examine it, they found that it fulfilled many of the most important conditions of a healthy place of residence. They accordingly recorded a strong opinion in its favour. "The Committee," they wrote, "are not aware of any physical indications by which the healthiness of an uncleared locality can be absolutely predicated, but so far as ordinary experience can be accepted as a safe guide, Old Harbour seems to afford fair promise of proving as healthy as any locality similarly situated in a tropical region. Its means of drainage are ample and most efficient, the removal of all effete matter beyond the reach of causing mischief will be easy, and any possible existing tracts of marsh land do not lie in the direction of the prevailing winds. We are therefore of opinion that as a small portion of it (Chatham Island) proved continuously healthy during the time it was occupied, sixty years since, with ordinary care in the construction of buildings and strict attention to conservancy arrangements, a more extended and permanent settlement will prove equally salubrious."

6. The Committee afterwards visited other parts of the Andaman Group, but they found no spot fulfilling so many conditions essential to success, and they finally arrived at the conclusion that "Old Harbour is the only place that possesses the greater number of the requisites for a penal settlement, and they accordingly recommend its occupation for that purpose, in preference to any other of the localities visited and examined."

7. The natural resources of the proposed locality which the Committee recommend should be named "Port Blair" in honour of the



intelligent officer whose name is identified with our first efforts to colonize the Andaman Islands, are said to be considerable. There is an abundance of good water, much culturable land, and, judging by the luxuriance of the vegetation, a generally fertile soil; there is excellent clay for the manufacture of bricks, an inexhaustible supply of sandstone for building purposes, and large forest trees for timber, circumstances which will greatly facilitate your operations for the establishment of the proposed settlement.

8. With regard to the inhabitants of the islands, the report of the Committee bears out, except in one particular, the description given by former authorities. The exploring parties could find no trace of cannibalism, but the inhabitants are represented as of an exceedingly savage, suspicious, and implacable character, resenting all our efforts at intercourse, and inviting hostilities whenever our people approached them. The proceedings of the expedition towards these poor people were distinguished by the greatest forbearance and humanity; but the aggressiveness of the savages was such that collision could not be altogether avoided, and in one affray invited by the natives, three of their number were killed, and one prisoner was taken and subsequently carried to Calcutta, with the view of educating him, and making him a medium of communication with the natives, by means of which they might be taught that our intentions towards the people of the islands are of the most friendly character. The man however soon sickened in Bengal, and you were compelled to send him back to his native island, but not without the hope that by furnishing him with a number of useful articles of peace, as well as with certain objects of savage finery, a favourable impression might still be made upon the minds of these strange people.

9. The admirable manner in which Dr. Mouat and his associates in the Committee of exploration performed the duties entrusted to them, is sufficient proof of the wisdom of the selection. They evinced great intelligence and sound discretion in the prosecution of their investigations; and in their dealings with the savage people of the island, a laudable humanity and forbearance. Their report is extremely curious and interesting; and we do not doubt that you will



cause it to be included in the published selections from the records of your Government, taking care to illustrate it with an intelligible map, the want of which at present very much impairs the value of the Report.

10. This report having been taken into the consideration of your Government, you were of opinion that a convict settlement might be advantageously established at Port Blair. You, therefore, directed Captain Man, the Executive Engineer and Superintendent of Convicts at Moulmein, to proceed to hoist the British Flag, and to take formal possession of the group of Islands, called the Andaman Islands, consisting of the Great and Little Andamans, and all the Islands adjacent thereto, in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, and the East India Company; and you made arrangements for a party of convicts, mostly sepoy mutineers, who had been sent down from the Punjab to Karachi, to be conveyed at once to Port Blair, instead of to the Tenasserim provinces, as originally intended.

11. On the subject of the proposed penal settlement, and the disposal of the convicts, we shall address you separately in the Judicial Department. In the meanwhile, we record our entire approval of the measures which you have adopted to bring the Andaman Islands again under the authority of the British Government. But we must express our earnest desire that all possible precautions may be taken to protect the aboriginal inhabitants of the Andamans from those collisions with the convicts which, it is only too probable, will be provoked on both sides, and which, once commenced, are so likely to end in the extermination of the weaker race. Such precautions are rendered the more indispensable by the circumstances stated in the papers before us, that you purpose to place arms in the hands of some of the convict sepoys, for purposes of self-defence, a step which, on all other grounds, it was obviously expedient to avoid.



CHAPTER VIII.

Opening of the Settlement by Dr. Walker—Trouble given by the convicts escaping—Severe measures taken—Inefficient guard—Letter to Dr. Walker—Measures taken to improve discipline and health—Search for thatching leaves resulted in a collision with the Aborigines—Guard strengthened—Enlargement of the Settlement—Dr. Walker's proposals for the protection of the Aborigines—Answers of the Government of India—Viper Island occupied—The Andamanese collect in large numbers, and are hostile—Attacks by the Andamanese—The "Battle of Aberdeen"—Dudhnath Tewari's account of the Andamanese—Remarks on the account—Boorhana's false account of the Andamanese—Boorhana's account of a wreck on Rutland Island—Dr. Walker's resignation—Captain Haughton succeeds him.

A DETAILED history of the formation of our present Penal Settlement on the Andaman Islands is not within the province of this work, but it is necessary that certain facts regarding the progress of the Settlement should be occasionally mentioned, as this for the first few years was intimately connected with our relations with the Aborigines, and his policy towards the Andamanese was one of the most difficult duties of the Superintendent, as he had to observe the orders from the Court of Directors and the Government of India that the Andamanese were not to be ill-treated or in any way injured, and also to take steps to protect the convicts at work in the jungle from the attacks of the savages, which even endangered the general safety of the Settlement.

Having once decided on their policy in the Andaman Islands, the Government of India lost no time in carrying it out.

For various reasons the orders contained in letter No. 87 of the 15th January, 1858, to Captain Man, had to be modified, and he did not appoint the first Superintendent, nor did he make periodical visits of inspection to the Andamans as at first proposed.

On Dr. Mouat's nomination, Dr. James Pattison Walker, who had had much experience as a Jail Superintendent, and bore a high reputation for his excellent management of convicts, was selected to be the first Superintendent of the Penal Settlement of Port Blair.

He left Calcutta in the Hon'ble Company's Steam Frigate *Semi-amis* on the 4th March, 1858, with 200 convicts, a native overseer,



two native doctors, and a guard of 50 Naval Brigadesmen under an officer of the Indian Navy, and reached Port Blair on the 10th March.

He found on his arrival that no provision for the convicts existed in Port Blair, and therefore requested the Commander of the Hon'ble Company's Surveying Brig *Mutlah*, which was in the harbour, to receive him on board and render assistance generally, and made a requisition on the Commander of the *Semiramis* for such provisions as he could spare, requesting him at the same time to proceed with all expedition to the Commissioner of Moulmein and procure provisions for the Settlement. The *Semiramis* returned with the provisions on the 20th March, bringing also Captain Man, who had hoisted the British Flag at the Andamans on the 22nd January, 1858, and had then returned to Moulmein to make further arrangements.

Immediately on arrival, the convicts were set to clear Chatham Island, but, as it appeared that the supply of water there was inadequate, three gangs of 25 men each were sent to clear Ross Island at the mouth of the harbour.

Dr. Walker's remarks on the jungle are of interest. He writes:—

"The magnitude of the task of clearing the primeval jungle of the Andaman Islands can only be appreciated by those who have witnessed the nature of the vegetation and the difficulty of effecting a clearance. The jungle is so dense, and its entanglement by gigantic creepers so complete, as to render it impassable, except along the few pathways used by the aborigines. The jungle, so far as is known, is continuous, no open plains having been observed. Even when cut, often trees cannot be got to fall without great force, nor brushwood when cut removed, owing to the intricate binding by creepers of great strength. There is great difficulty even during the present dry weather in getting brushwood that has been several days felled to burn, and the largest heaps are constantly extinguished at night by the very heavy dews that fall, drenching everything exposed."

Dr. Walker worked with great energy and was most sanguine about the future of the Settlement, offering to take almost any number of convicts which the Government of India chose to send. Up to this time, however (6th April, 1858), he had neither experienced the



effect of the rainy season, nor the hostility of the aborigines who were as yet holding aloof and had not begun to give any trouble; nor did he appreciate the amount of trouble (by repeated escapes, etc.) the convicts had already commenced to give, and afterwards gave, showing him that his guard was insufficient for even the small number of convicts he then had (773 by the end of June, 1858).

His following remarks on the convicts and their behaviour will show that immediately after their arrival they commenced to escape, and the tale of their delusions and sufferings is the same as that of their fellow-prisoners up to the present day:—

“Considering all things, I have reason to be satisfied with the general conduct of the convicts. On the fourth day after arrival, convict No. 61, Narain, sentenced on the 31st July last to transportation for life for having excited sedition in the cantonment of Dinapore, where he was camp follower in the bazar, after failing in an attempt to excite the convicts with whom he was working to rebel, attempted to escape from Chatham Island by swimming to the mainland, and nearly succeeded. He was made to alter his course by being fired upon, and was captured by a boat's crew. He was at once brought to trial, convicted of sedition and escaping, sentenced to suffer death, and executed. On the same day, and about the same time, convict 46, Naringun Singh, sentenced at Nuddea to transportation for life, for desertion, committed suicide by hanging himself, without any known cause, at a secluded spot on Ross Island. On the night of the 18th March, 21 convicts escaped on a raft from Ross Island to the main land, in the hope of being able to reach the continent of India by a narrow neck of land supposed to connect the Great Andaman to Burma. On the 23rd of March, eleven convicts escaped from Ross Island. They were seen several miles to the south a few days subsequently, and were unsuccessfully pursued. On the 30th March, one of the convicts who escaped on the 18th idem, delivered himself up to a boat's crew near Chatham Island. He was in a debilitated state from want of food and water, and covered with vermin, that infested even his ears and eyelids, adhering so firmly that he could not remove them. He stated that having along with others been



duped by a fellow prisoner, who pretended to have held communication with one of the aborigines, who promised assistance on the part of a Rajah, they escaped, and after traversing the south of the Great Andaman by the sea shore, during which they underwent great hardships from want of food, and especially fresh water, were attacked by about one hundred savage aborigines, one of whose first arrows inflicted a mortal wound on the convict leader. The returned convict, at the time of escaping into the jungle, heard the fight proceeding for some time, and was under the impression that all his companions were massacred. Guided by the morning and evening guns he directed his course towards Port Blair, which he reached in three days, during which he had not met with water. He observed tracks of the aborigines in his course hitherwards, but carefully avoided them. His account of the privations he suffered has had a good effect upon the other convicts, none of whom have since tried to escape.

"The fate of those who escaped on the second occasion is unknown, but there is little chance of their escaping death, either by hunger or by the hands of savage aborigines, whose hostility to all strangers is most unrelenting, and who at present must be considered unamenable to conciliation."

Mrs. Walker joined her husband by the *Dalhousie* on the 15th April, 1858, and Mr. Assistant Surgeon Alexander Gamaek, M.D., Mr. Assistant Apothecary J. Ringrow, Mr. Richardson, Overseer, and the Superintendent's Naval Guard of 50 men commanded by Lieutenant Templer, I.N., composed the staff of the Settlement.

With this small number of Europeans, with the heavy rains and the malaria rising from the newly cleared soil, the known dangers from the insufficiently guarded body of very dangerous convicts, and the suspected (and much magnified) dangers from the hostile aborigines, the lives of Dr. Walker and his colleagues could not have been pleasant. Cut off from India, with only uncertain and occasional communications, principally with Moulmein, from whence at first all supplies were obtained, Dr. Walker conceived it necessary to rule the convicts with a severity which was perhaps carried to excess.



It can easily be understood that, immediately after the Mutiny, officers who had served through that awful time of trial could not be expected to treat a body of convicted rebels and mutineers with any undue leniency. Dr. Walker, in sentencing to death all those convicts who attempted to escape, considered that he was acting in the best interests of discipline, but the fear of capital punishment even did not deter the class of convicts he had to deal with from escaping.

They were almost maddened with their horror of the Andamans and the tales of the dreaded savages (for to be sent across the "black water" was then the greatest punishment that could be inflicted on a Native), and they cared nothing for the risk to their lives, if by chance they might succeed in getting back to their own country.

Finding that the desired effect was not obtained, the Government of India shortly afterwards directed that capital punishment was not to be awarded for attempts to escape.

Both from the records, and from the accounts of convicts who were then in Port Blair, I learn that there was at that time much violence and insubordination, a gang of 500 Punjabis giving special trouble, and Dr. Walker was obliged to resort to the sternest measures.

The customs of the Tasmanian discipline were enforced, convicts were handcuffed together in pairs, and these handcuffs were *never* opened. During working hours the worst characters were taken to the sea beach, and, an iron bar being passed through the fetters of a number of them, they were thus fastened to the earth, and made to do what work they could in a sitting posture.

This extreme severity, coupled as it was even with good feeding and care, did not have any beneficial effect, and on the arrival of Captain Haughton on the 3rd October, 1859, to succeed Dr. Walker as Superintendent, the discipline was much relaxed without any bad effects.

Dr. Walker's aim, when establishing the Settlement, seems to have been to keep as good penal discipline as that to which he had been accustomed in the Agra Jail, and he never seems to have realised that, owing to the very different conditions, this was impossible.



He was confronted with two principal difficulties: the numerous escapes of the convicts which his small and insufficient guard was powerless to prevent, and the implacable hostility of the aborigines.

To the convicts, the climate and general appearance of the country must have come as a great shock. They were, to begin with, not ordinary jail-birds, but were desperate men, and Dr. Walker's great severity made them care little whether they died at the hands of the aborigines, or of starvation in the jungle while attempting to escape, or whether they died, as they expected to, in Port Blair. Buoyed up as they were by false tales about the Andaman Islands being part of the mainland of India or Burma, there was just sufficient hope of a successful escape for them to risk what they knew probably awaited them in the jungle. On the 16th June, 1858, only three months after the opening of the Settlement, Dr. Walker's statement of the convicts is:—

Total received	...	...	...	773
Died in hospital	...	...	...	61
Escaped and not recaptured (probably died of starvation, or killed by the savages)	...	...	...	140
Suicide	...	...	...	1
Hanged for attempting to escape	...	...	...	87

Four hundred and eighty-one convicts thus remained in the Settlement, of whom 60 were then in hospital, and this during the dry and healthy season before the commencement of the rains.

Dr. Walker was undoubtedly an energetic and able officer, and many of his suggestions regarding the Settlement have since been carried out, but he wished to move at a far quicker pace than the Government of India had any intention of doing.

At his request, both to prevent escapes and to protect the Settlement from the Andamanese, the Naval Guard was doubled, and a Sebundy Corps of Madrasis was established, which latter, proving a failure, was disbanded.

He was willing to take 10,000 mutineers and rebel convicts during the first year, and to continue to take a similar number for the following five years, and he very wisely recommended that the free



families of the convicts should in some cases be permitted to accompany them, as this would tend to lessen the number of escapes, but the Settlement was not sufficiently advanced at that time for this to be sanctioned.

The Naval Guard, which formed the entire garrison of the Settlement, was drawn from the Naval Brigade which had been raised during the Mutiny, and though containing several ex-men-of-war's men, and others experienced in fighting and accustomed to discipline, was principally composed of seamen from the Merchant Service, who had been hastily drilled and formed into a brigade, and who were, as I have it from eye-witnesses, as a body, lawless, undisciplined, and quite unsuited to such work as the protection of a penal settlement, and still more unfitted to be a Frontier Guard by whose tact, firmness, and good conduct, our first favourable impressions were to be made on the Andamanese, and permanent friendly relations were to be subsequently established. As I shall show from the records, it was not until the superior officers of the Settlement took the direct conduct of Andamanese affairs into their own hands that any favourable impression was made upon these people.

The following extracts from correspondence between Dr. Walker and the Government of India will be found of interest, and show how much our administration of the Settlement was affected by our relations with the aborigines.

In letter No. 743, dated 7th May, 1858, from the Secretary to the Government of India in the Home Department, to the Superintendent of Port Blair, Mr. C. Beadon writes :—

“3. It is not probable that more than 10,000 mutineer and rebel convicts will be sent to Port Blair this year, if at all : but enquiry has been made as to the number likely to be so sentenced. With the result of this enquiry you shall be made acquainted as soon as possible, but the information procurable on the latter head must necessarily be vague and uncertain.

“4. The President in Council regrets to find from the documents which accompanied your demi-official letter of the 24th April, that



the story of the convict, who returned alone from among those who escaped on the 11th March, was not sufficient to deter another and a more numerous body from making a similar attempt. There can be little doubt that these misguided men must eventually perish, unless they return to the Settlement; but His Honor in Council approves of your determination not to give fire-arms again to the convicts for the present and not to allow them to work at Phoenix Bay or elsewhere on the main land, until you can send a number large enough to protect themselves against the savages without such weapons.

"5. You have no doubt taken every means in your power to impress upon the convicts the utter hopelessness of these attempts, and to explain to them the impossibility of either leaving the island or of escaping the inevitable fate that awaits them either from hunger or from the hostile attacks of the savages. It is to be hoped that some of those who escaped on the 17th and 22nd of April may find their way back to Port Blair, and that their testimony, confirming, as it undoubtedly will, that of the former return fugitive, will prevent the remainder from being led away by false stories of the possibility of either leaving the island or of forming alliance with the aborigines who appear to be not less hostile to the natives of India than they are to Europeans."

Dr. Walker was also told that his proposal to establish the Headquarters of the Settlement on Ross Island, instead of Chatham Island, was approved, and that a monthly communication between Calcutta and Port Blair would be kept up.

Mr. Beadon added :—

"15. Captain Man having now returned to Moulmein, it is no longer necessary that he should exercise any authority in the Settlement. This will be intimated to him, and you will henceforth correspond direct with the Government of India, in this Department, and receive your instructions direct from the President in Council. Captain Man will, however, be requested to give you every assistance in procuring whatever supplies you may be in want of from Moulmein."

(It is noteworthy that, so great was the fear of the Andamanese at this time, no attempt was made to explore the creeks running off



the harbour, and supplies of thatching-leaves were actually obtained from Moulmein, though they grew in large numbers by these creeks.)

"19. At present, the guard at the Settlement, in addition to the crews of the schooner *Charlotte*, the *Pluto*, and the *Sesostris*, consists of 50 men of the Indian Navy under a commissioned officer and a midshipman. I am directed to request that you will report whether any addition to the force is necessary, either now or when the number of convicts is considerably increased. The safety of the officers of the establishment and of the public buildings must be placed beyond all risk of injury, either from the convicts or the aborigines of the island.

"The President in Council desires me particularly to caution you against being lulled in to a false sense of security by the absence of any apparent intention or desire on the part of the convicts to defy your authority. The fire-arms of the guard should be always loaded, and it should be impossible for any number of convicts by a rush or otherwise to get them into their own hands for a moment; and the guard should always be ready to act at once on the shortest notice.

"20. Captain Campbell, of the *Sesostris*, had reported the capture of a Malay boat on the coast of the Andamans in the vicinity of Port Blair, with papers from the authorities at Penang, authorising it to proceed to the Andamans for the purpose of collecting birds' nests and sea slugs. The Straits authorities will be desired not to give such papers in future, and to make it known that the resort of Malay boats to these islands is prohibited, and that any found there will be liable to detention and confiscation."

No. 835, dated 26th May, 1858\

From--C. Beadon, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India.

To--Dr. J. P. Walker, Superintendent of the Penal Settlement at Port Blair in the Andamans.

Your demi-official communication of the 1st instant, reporting the escape of large numbers of convicts from the Settlement, etc., was



laid by me before the Hon'ble the President in Council, and I am directed to request that you will have the goodness in future to report officially and in greater detail all occurrences of this kind. In regard to the instances of escape which you mention, it should be explained what the obstacles were which it was anticipated would have prevented the men from escaping, or how they overcame those obstacles, or whether it is possible to prevent others doing the like, and, if so, by what means.

"2. Unless escapes can otherwise be prevented, the convicts should be kept in irons till other means of prevention are available.

"I would earnestly recommend that all the convicts be marked on some conspicuous place such as the breast or arms. Vessels do at present touch at these islands searching for trepang and birds' nests, and these might afford opportunities for the convicts to escape, and once landed on the coast, they would merge in the general population of the country, and be secure from detection."

"3. It has been proposed by Captain Man (an extract from whose demi-official letter, dated the 15th ultimo, is quoted in the margin) to brand all convicts transported to Port Blair. The chances of escape by means of boats touching at the islands, as supposed by Captain Man in this extract,

will have to be guarded against by you under the orders of Government contained in paragraph 19 of my letter No. 743, dated the 7th instant, but lest the precautions against the resort of the boats to the islands should be evaded, or other means of escape should present themselves, it may be necessary to have recourse to branding. On this point, I am desired to request that you will give your opinion.

"4. Captain Campbell, the senior officer of the Indian Navy who visited Port Blair in the *Semiramis*, has been consulted as to the best mode of preventing escapes, and especially whether in his opinion any additional naval means are necessary for that purpose.

"5. The President in Council observes from your report that out of 252 convicts on Chatham Island, 75 were sick in hospital. It was to be expected that there would be much sickness during the first year among men from the North-Western Provinces, in a climate where, as you observe, 3 inches of rain fall in a few hours, and where the rainy season lasts from May to November; but the nature of the



disease which has suddenly attacked so many should have been mentioned, and you will be so good as to supply this omission."

In reply to this question about branding, Dr. Walker writes:—

"I concur entirely with Captain Man's suggestion.

"2. I would suggest that the branding be on the front of the right fore-arm, and that the letters $\frac{P. B.}{L.}$ be marked in the case of life, and $\frac{P. B.}{T.}$ in the case of term convicts, and that in every case the con-

vict's register number, which is the key to all information regarding his name, caste, crime, sentence, and personal description, be inserted

below the letters, as

P. B.	P. B.
L.	T.
1085	897

"3. The letters might be inserted at the port of shipment, leaving only the register number (which cannot be known elsewhere) to be inserted here."

It was resolved by the Government of India, however, on the 28th August, 1858, that the convicts of the Penal Settlement should not be branded. By July, 1858, the sick-rate had become very high, and during that month 28 inches of rain fell in the Settlement. Dr. Walker's reports show that some of the guard were still living in tents, and that his carpenters were unskilled and worthless, and the materials he had for erecting buildings, inferior and insufficient.

At this time, he began to feel the impossibility of carrying on the work alone, and represented that a Deputy Superintendent was required to relieve the Superintendent when sick.

In October and November, 1858, the Government of India write regarding the escapes of convicts, and the high sick-rate.

20th October, 1858:—

"4. In regard to the number of escapes reported by you, and to the means you have adopted for preventing them in future, His Honor in Council desires me to request that fetters may not be put on the convicts as a general measure, if it be possible to avoid it. Experience has shown that the imposition of fetters does not prevent



men from escaping, if they be inclined to make the attempt; and it will not deter them from committing suicide, if that were the fate of those to whom you refer in this letter.

"5. If fetters be imposed on the general body of the convicts, not only will they, as you observe, be likely to be driven to desperation but the present sickness among them will be increased, and their working power diminished."

On the 6th November, 1858 :—

"Now that huts raised five feet from the ground have been built for the accommodation of 1,000 prisoners on Ross Island, it is hoped that the health of the men will greatly improve.

"The President in Council has read the report of Dr. Gamack, dated the 25th ultimo, with painful interest. It would appear, however, that the severe sickness and mortality among the convicts has been owing chiefly to causes of a temporary nature, unavoidable on the first commencement of the Settlement, and now in a great measure removed.

"Up to the 28th September, there had been 169 deaths in hospital among 1,330 convicts, being at the rate of nearly 24 per cent. per annum.

"The number of sick in hospital on that date was 91, or about 10 per cent. of the whole remaining number."

The question of obtaining thatching leaves to roof the buildings, properly house the convicts, and thus possibly reduce the sick-rate, led to our coming more into contact with the Andamanese.

On the 17th April, 1858, Dr. Walker sent the *Pluto* to Tavoy for thatching leaves and other materials. These were despatched in a Chinese junk, which was towed to sea by the *Pluto* on the 1st May. The junk actually got to within sight of the Andamans when the monsoon changed, and owing to the bad weather she was driven back to Tavoy, where she discharged her cargo, thus causing a dead loss to Government of Rs. 2,500, and much hindering Dr. Walker's work.

The President in Council remarked on this that he trusted it might not again be necessary to send for leaves, etc., to the



Tenasserim coast, but that these should be obtained in the Andamans. He positively prohibited the further employment of steamers for the conveyance of thatching leaves.

Dr. Walker was, therefore, obliged to search in the heads of the creeks for these, and so came into contact with the aborigines living there. A collision appears to have taken place between the officers and men of the surveying brig *Mutlak*, and the Andamanese, on the 5th March, 1858. The quarrel seems to have been commenced by the imprudent conduct of a midshipman, whose promotion was accordingly stopped, and one of the officers of the *Mutlak* was killed by the Andamanese. His watch was subsequently found during another skirmish on the 5th July, 1858. Forty Andamanese huts were destroyed by the men of the *Mutlak* in revenge.

While the Government of India were most anxious to protect the Andamanese from the effects of our occupation of their country, the feelings of the officials in Port Blair were, that they and their ships required protection from the Andamanese; and as Dr. Walker urges elsewhere, with regard to the hostility of the Andamanese, the weaker race certainly required protection or they would be exterminated, but "the weaker race" were the convicts, and not the Andamanese, as the Government of India appeared to think.

Captain Campbell, of the Indian Navy, whose opinion was asked regarding the escapes of convicts, writes on the 19th June, 1858, that:—

"Convicts cannot be prevented from escaping when working on the mainland, but they will only escape into the jungle and cannot get away from the Andamans, as the savages are far too hostile to allow one to escape them."

He thought that the guard of 50 men, the effective strength of which was much reduced by sickness, should be increased, and that a small heavily armed steam vessel should prowl about the coasts in fine weather to warn off merchant vessels, and at the same time protect them from the savages.

On the 19th July, 1858, 30 additional men arrived for the Naval Guard, but another Indian Navy officer was badly wanted. A midshipman had been temporarily given, but Dr. Walker wrote, with a



feeling that would have delighted Captain Marryat, "I am of opinion that the efficiency of the Naval Guard will be better secured by an increase of Warrant Officers, than by the addition of midshipmen."

This argument was admitted by the Government of India, who, on the 11th August, 1858, sent two Masters to replace two midshipmen.

The following extracts from important documents will show the views of the Government of India regarding escapes, and the policy to be observed towards the Andamanese, and Dr. Walker's reply to the same.

Extracts from letter No. 1079, dated 12th July, 1858, from Cecil Beadon, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India in the Home Department, to Dr. J. P. Walker, Superintendent of Port Blair :—

"3. His Honor in Council is gratified to learn that the conduct of the convicts since your last report had been satisfactory, and that no further attempts to escape had been made.

"5. The execution of the prisoner Narain, who, after failing to excite the other convicts of his gang to rebel, attempted to escape by swimming to the main island, and was caught in the act of escaping, was approved by the Government of India, as likely to deter others from following his example; but you will have gathered from paragraphs 4 and 5 of my letter of the 7th May, in which that approval was conveyed, that it did not enter into the contemplation of the Government that any large number who made their escape from the Settlement would in case of return be subjected to the same punishment. On the contrary, it was said that these misguided men must perish *unless* they returned to the Settlement, and a hope was expressed that some of them would find their way back, and that their testimony would prevent the remainder from being led away by false stories.

"6. It appears that notwithstanding the greatest care taken to impress upon the convicts the hopelessness of living in the jungle, and notwithstanding the means adopted to prevent escape, one-third of the whole number of convicts got away within fifty-one days after



the arrival of the first set. It is said that in the months of March and April 288 escaped—of those, at least 86 have been executed, 1 has been pardoned, 1 was in hospital untried, and 140 remained uncaptured, of whom it is improbable that any remain alive, half the number being known to have perished. In every case of recapture the runaway convicts returned and delivered themselves up, finding it impossible to withstand the savages or exist in the jungle.

"I am directed to forward a copy of a communication from Captain Campbell, No. 255, dated the 19th June, and to inform that he has been directed to double the guard. With this additional force, and with the *Charlotte* stationed between Ross Island and the mainland, it is hoped that any further attempts on the part of the convicts to leave the Settlement will be provided against, and that there will be complete security under careful management against any surprise. You will no doubt take the precaution of removing all boats from the shore at night fall, and making them fast to the vessels at anchor in the harbour.

"13. In the 16th paragraph of your letter you observe that the 'hostility of the aborigines to the settlers is unabated, and there seems 'not the slightest chance of being able to effect anything with them by 'a conciliating policy.' On this point, the Hon'ble Court have expressed a desire that measures should be taken to prevent the inhabitants of the island from suffering injury from the presence of the convicts. I am therefore directed to request that you will adhere strictly to the conciliating line of conduct which has hitherto been observed towards the aborigines, that you will absolutely prohibit any aggression upon them, and that force may on no account be resorted to, unless it be absolutely necessary, to repel their attacks.

"14. The President in Council regrets very much to hear that a collision ensued between the savages and a watering party of the Naval Guard, in consequence of the latter having been permitted to land unarmed, contrary to express order."

Dr. Walker replied, in letter No. 241 of 7th August, 1858, to the Government of India in the Home Department:—

"As my establishment of disciplinary officers consisted of only one



European and one Native Overseer, the former residing at night on board ship and the latter on Chatham Island, it was impossible that they could have exercised any influence in preventing escapes.

"3. The convicts on Chatham Island, Ross Island, and at Phoenix Bay were employed in clearing jungle, and the escapes were effected at night. Those from Ross Island crossed to the mainland on rafts. The Phoenix Bay convicts had only to enter the jungle they were clearing. Those from Chatham Island were assisted by the Phoenix Bay convicts, who sent a raft for them from the mainland.

"4. The convicts were not guarded. To have divided the Naval Guard, mere tyros in the use of fire-arms, into three detachments, for night duty on shore at each of the localities, would have exposed them to the risk of being massacred by mutineer convicts who had been accustomed to the use of fire-arms for many years. But the Naval Guard could not then, nor even now, reside on shore without serious injury to their health. Captain Campbell, I.N., whom I consulted, was opposed to their residing on shore during the day, and when I tried the experiment, the failing state of their health required that they should not remain longer on shore than was necessary as my personal guard; and even to that extent the length of time I was necessarily engaged on shore, now here, now there, was considered along with the pulling work, too severe, and a letter by Captain Campbell, endorsed by Captain Man then in charge at Port Blair, reached me suggesting the avoidance of too long exposure to the sun and night air at this critical season.

"5. But had the Naval Guard been on shore at Phoenix Bay, they could not have prevented escapes occurring, for when convicts are employed on the mainland in clearing jungle, no amount of guarding can prevent them from escaping, if so inclined, into the interior, as they must necessarily be more or less concealed in advance of their guard.

"6. The insular position of Chatham and Ross Islands admits of their being guarded by boats or vessels placed between them and the mainland, and that arrangement was adopted as soon as boats and



vessels were available. My letter No. 74, dated 7th May, represented that no boats either for the use of the Settlement generally, or for the Naval Guard in particular, had been assigned, and I submitted copies of my urgent letters of requisition, Nos. 45 and 47, to the Commanders of the Hon'ble Company's steamers *Pluto* and *Semiramis*, by which two boats were obtained, subsequently to the escapes. My letter No. 76, dated 19th June, reported the immediate employment of the Hon'ble Company's schooner *Charlotte*, on her arrival here on the 24th May, in guarding Ross Island. On the night following the receipt of the second boat she was manned by a night guard and placed between Chatham Island and the mainland.

"7. The obstacles which then (as now) were anticipated would have prevented the convicts from escaping, are the impossibility of subsisting on the mainland independently of the Settlement, the hostility of the savage aborigines, and the hopelessness of escaping to the continent of India. These were not then considered by the convicts to be insuperable difficulties, and they escaped from their working localities to the mainland, and were they now to become impressed with the belief that these ends are attainable, I apprehend that the insularity of Chatham Island and Ross Island the only natural obstacles to escapes, would not hinder them from making the attempt to adopt some means for eluding the vigilance of guards when the weather, tide, and darkness of the night favour their project.

"8. With regard to the means which have since been taken to prevent escapes, the Hon'ble Company's ship *Sesostris* is anchored between Ross Island and the mainland, as far into the channel as is considered safe, and as will admit her communicating by signals with the Hon'ble Company's schooner *Charlotte* anchored as far into the channel between Chatham Island and the mainland as is considered safe. When the weather permits, both of the positions are strengthened at night by detachments of the Naval Guard in the settlement boats, the latter arrangement, however, being maintained at the loss of health of the guard, seventeen of whom were at one time sick in hospital, chiefly from the effect of night exposure, as reported by the officer in medical charge. There is no doubt that the duty required from



the Naval Guard is very trying. A petty officer attached for ten months to a land battery in the Crimea describes the service here as more severe than there.

"9. The measures in force have been so successful that no escapes occurred between the 24th April and the 24th July, when four convicts either effected their escape from Ross Island at night or committed suicide by drowning. The night being clear and windy, it was not deemed necessary to despatch a guard boat in advance of the *Sesostriis* as usual. No one here believes that the men, who were weakly, would have crossed to the mainland. Since then, no escape has occurred."

Dr. Walker pushed on the Settlement with great energy. Bamboos and thatching leaves having been found in the jungle were cut and brought in by the convicts, who, with them, made huts for themselves, and by September, 1858 (thinking that to be the end of the rainy season, instead of what it really was, the change of the monsoon), Dr. Walker began to sink wells at the upper end of the harbour, and arrange to occupy the mainland there. His idea was, on the arrival of the Sebundy Guard from Madras, to send a division of 421 convicts to the neck of land between Port Blair and Port Mouat; these men were to settle in sixteen villages on the Port Blair side of the neck, and a similar division was to settle in sixteen villages on the Port Mouat side. Each village was to be 660 feet broad, the Port Blair villages extending west towards Port Mouat, and the Port Mouat villages extending east towards Port Blair. He considered that intermediate villages might also be necessary to strengthen the whole as a frontier against the savages, and advocated having 1,684 convicts cultivating 64 villages. He also wished to encourage these convicts to get their wives and families down from India.

Towards the close of the year, the number of escapes considerably diminished; occasionally an escaped convict returned, but generally all who went into the jungle were killed by the aborigines.

Dr. Walker's proposals for the protection of the aborigines, which were submitted under the following circumstances, are here given.



A skirmish took place between a party of the Naval Brigade and the Andamanese, between North and Perseverance Points, on the 5th August, 1858, the details of which were as follows :—

A signal was made from the schooner *Charlotte* on that day that natives were in sight on the north side of the bay, and Lieutenant Templer, I.N., accompanied by Mr. Rowe, Chief Officer of the *Sesostris*, proceeded with one petty officer and eight men to reconnoitre and watch their movements. This was done by order of Dr. Walker, who writes of the affair :—

“On rounding Perseverance Point, one man was seen in a canoe close under the mangrove bushes, who was evidently trying to get away. Chase was given, and as the party approached, two more canoes were seen hauled up on the shore. On nearing the first one, the party was received with a shower of arrows, and, as it is added in the report of the skirmish that a native on the shore was shot, it is to be inferred that the shower of arrows came from the shore, and that it was returned with bullets from the boat.

“Lieutenant Templer then, leaving four men in the boat under Mr. Rowe, landed with five men, and after some firing seized the canoe that was there and then rushed through the village and seized the other two canoes on the other side of the mangroves.

“The party then, after destroying some of the huts which were too green to burn, returned with three canoes and the body of the native who was killed, the other natives howling most piteously after them. Not one of the party was touched, but Lieutenant Templer thinks that several of the natives were wounded, as five or six were seen to drop. Lieutenant Templer, in his report, expressed his intention of destroying the village with my permission, and this was accordingly done. In one of the canoes there was found part of a watch supposed to belong to one of the officers of the *Mutlak* who was murdered by the savages on the 5th March, 1858.”

The Government of India, in commenting upon this occurrence, state in a letter to Dr. Walker :—

“You have already been made aware of the wishes of the Court of Directors in regard to the policy to be observed towards the natives



of the Andamans, and in paragraph 13 of my letter No. 1079, dated 12th ultimo, you were requested to 'adhere strictly to the conciliating line of conduct which has hitherto been observed towards the aborigines', to 'absolutely prohibit any aggression upon them' and not to allow force on any account to be resorted to 'unless it be absolutely necessary to repel their attacks.'

"8. These instructions are of date subsequent to the occurrence now reported, but Lieutenant Templer's proceedings appear to the President in Council to afford very proper opportunity for emphatically repeating them for your guidance, and for that of all the officers and men employed at the Settlement.

"9. On this occasion, as it appears from the papers, our people were the assailants. Though the disposition of the natives at large is known to be hostile, there is no ground assigned for supposing that they appeared on the north side of the port and established a village there with any special intention of giving annoyance. The attack, therefore, was unprovoked and without justification. The native who was seen in a canoe very naturally tried to get away when he saw the armed boat approaching, but there was no reason for immediately giving chase and pursuing the man to within the reach of the arrows of his own countrymen.

"10. The subsequent capture of the canoes and partial destruction of the village appear to have been ordered as act of retaliation for the attack of the natives on the boat; but this attack was provoked by Lieutenant Templer's pursuit of the man in the canoe, and the complete destruction of the village on a subsequent day was an unnecessary and deliberate act of revenge not calculated, any more than the original pursuit of the canoe, to induce the natives to abandon their hostility towards us.

"11. The President in Council fully appreciates the difficulties of your position. But the aborigines of the Andamans are apparently unable to conceive the possibility of the two races co-existing on the islands, except on terms of internecine hostility. This idea is assuredly strengthened by every attack we make upon them, and can only be driven out of their minds by a course of persistent conciliation and

forbearance on our part. The President in Council would have been disposed to encourage the settlement of a village of these savages on the north side of the bay, where they could not at present interfere with the progress of the Settlement or give us any annoyance, and where they might gradually become familiar with our appearance and divest themselves of the fear which is obviously the moving cause of their present aversion. Every effort must be made to teach them that we desire to cultivate friendly relations, and have no intention of attacking them or doing them any injury, unless they compel us to act in self-defence."

Dr. Walker then submitted the following proposals for the protection of the aborigines:—

Letter No. 304 to Home Department, 4th September, 1858.

"Paragraph 3.—The precautions I propose to take for the protection of the aborigines from collision with the convicts are to select a suitable portion of the Great Andaman Island, of sufficient area for cultivation for many years by several thousand convict settlers, and which, from the natural formation of the land, is susceptible of isolation by a military cordon, then to expel the aborigines out of the Settlement land and keep them out by the military guard, unless they manifest a desire to cultivate friendly relations, which will be encouraged by all means which experience may indicate as likely to be successful.

"4. I have selected about fifty square miles of the southernmost part of the Great Andaman for the convict settlement, bounded on the east by the ocean, on the south by McPherson's Straits, on the west by the Labyrinth, on the north by Port Mouat and Port Blair with the intermediate neck of land about two miles in breadth. It is on this neck of land that I propose to construct entrenchments, fortlets, or stockades, and establish a military cordon with the local corps of Madrasis, now being raised for the Settlement service for the protection of the convicts against the murderous attacks of the aborigines, and thus avoid the necessity, which otherwise would exist, of placing arms in the hands of convict sepoys for the purposes of self-



defence, a step which the Hon'ble Court truly observes 'it was obviously expedient to avoid.'

"5. The expulsion of the aboriginal savages from the Settlement lands, it is supposed, will be effected by their gradual retirement as the occupation of the land by the convict settlers proceeds. Should they, however, continue their murderous assaults upon the unarmed convicts, it will be necessary to expel them with as little force as possible to prevent 'those collisions with the convicts which it is only too probable will be provoked on both sides,' and which, as the Hon'ble Court remarks, 'once commenced are so likely to end in the extermination of the weaker race.' As far as I can judge, the unarmed convicts are the weaker race, and unless they be well protected, they will be exterminated by the savages. I think it probable that even the detachments of the military guard will occasionally be attacked by the savages and massacred, unless constantly on the alert, and well prepared to defend themselves."

The Government of India in the Home Department (letter No. 1823, of the 3rd December, 1858), in acknowledging letter No. 304 of the 4th September from Dr. Walker regarding measures to be taken to prevent collisions between Andamanese and convicts, state, after quoting the details of the proposed plan:—

"Paragraph 3. For this purpose you have selected the southernmost part of the Great Andaman, bounded on the north by Port Blair and Port Mouat, and the intermediate neck of land about two miles in breadth. On this neck you propose to construct entrenchments, fortlets, or stockades, and establish a military cordon with the local corps of Madrasis now being raised for service in the Andamans, with a view to protect the convicts from the attacks of the aborigines and to avoid the necessity for arming the convicts in self-defence.

"4. It might perhaps be beneficial to the Settlement in a sanitary point of view to cut a broad vista through the jungle from Port Blair to Port Mouat, and it might have the effect of inducing the savages to keep to the north of the line thus laid down; but if any attempt be made to drive them by force out of the southern part of the island, the orders of the Hon'ble Court and of this Government,



which restrict the use of force against the aborigines, except for the purposes of self-defence, will be contravened.

"5. Moreover, it appears to the President in Council that the plan you have formed is based on an expectation that the number of rebel and mutineer convicts at the Settlement will be indefinitely increased, and may amount to several thousands—an expectation which, now that an amnesty has been proclaimed, and the rebels are beginning to surrender on promise of pardon, is not at all likely to be realised. There has been found great difficulty also in inducing men to enlist for the service, and though higher terms have been offered, some time must elapse before the company of Sebundis can be raised and placed at your disposal. Even then, as it appears to the President in Council, the Sebundis will be required for the ordinary duties of the Settlement, in addition to the European guard, and can hardly be spared for the purpose of guarding such a line as you propose at a distance from headquarters.

"6. Taking these circumstances into consideration, it appears to the President in Council that it would be on the whole a more prudent measure, after occupying the islands in Port Blair, to clear the mainland gradually and uniformly from the south shore of the bay, establishing advanced posts near the edge of the jungle, and leaving only cultivation and the dwellings of the colonists in the rear. In this way the operations of all the convicts would be carried on under your own immediate view and almost within call of Ross Island, where you have established the headquarters of the Settlement. It is not likely that the savages would venture out of the jungle to attack the convicts in the cleared country or in their villages, but should they do so, they would be easily repulsed, and there would then be no reason for abstaining from the use of such force as might be necessary for the purpose."

The remarks of the Government of India are sufficient comments on Dr. Walker's scheme, which, as it never came into operation, need not be further dealt with, and is only quoted in order to show the line of policy which the Settlement authorities considered should be



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adopted towards the Andamanese, and the bent of their minds where Andamanese were concerned.

On the 8th October, 1858, Viper Island was occupied by four sections of convicts, and a guard of the Naval Brigade, who lived on shore during the day and passed the night in a boat. The *Charlotte* anchored off Viper as a guardship.

By this time the convicts had begun to distrust each other, and owing to informers among them, several attempts to escape were frustrated. Having Viper Island as a headquarter station, two attempts were made to cross the South Andaman Island from Port Blair to Port Mouat, but without success, as the track cut was taken too far to the northward. The Andamanese collected at night round the encampment of the party in large numbers, but there was no collision.

Dr. Walker had some hope, which was subsequently realised, of trying to make friends with the Andamanese near Viper Island. By the close of the year they were believed to have killed 170 runaway convicts.

In March 1859, a runaway convict returned from the jungle and informed Dr. Walker that he had been taken prisoner by the aborigines and had remained with them for two or three days, during which time he was well treated and witnessed their mode of life. He said that they subsisted upon cooked food obtained by hunting and fishing, that they obtained their supply of fresh water from a river (which was untrue), that they cooked everything they eat, and, so far as he could judge, showed no signs of being cannibals.

The general hostility of the Andamanese towards the settlers was as great as ever, and working parties were continually being attacked by them.

In March 1859, the Naval Guard were attacked at Watering Cove, but no harm was done.

On the 6th April, 248 convicts of the first division, employed in digging wells, constructing huts, and clearing the jungle at Haddo, on the mainland opposite Chatham Island, were attacked by about 200 of the aborigines who were armed with bows and arrows. Three