

INSPECTION REPORT

ON THE

PENAL SETTLEMENT OF PORT BLAIR,

BY

MAJOR H. N. DAVIES, B. S. C.,

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INDEX.

SUBJECT.	Para.	Page.
Pres. able	1	1
al at Port Blair	2	1
Pl. sical characteristics of the Andamans	3	1
Geographical position and importance of Port Blair as a harbour	4	2
Formation, abandonment, and re-occupation of the Settlement	5	2
General view of the position of the several stations of the Settlement	6	2
First impression and review of the general progress of the Settlement	7	3
Description of Ross Island	8	4
Fair progress made in the planting of trees	9	4
Return of trees, &c., on the Island	10	4
On Ross Island are Head Quarters of Departments	11	5
Population and Garrison	12	5
Quarters and Buildings	13	5
Erection of Stone Barracks	14	6
Return of Self-Supporters on Ross	15	7
Schools,—European, Eurasian, and Asiatics	16	8
The suspension of building a new School House suggested	17	8
Healthiness of Ross Island, and the detention of convicts on first arrival	18	8
Water	19	8
Jetty	20	9
Conservancy and general arrangements good	21	9
South Point, a mainland station	22	9
The bunding in of a Mangrove Swamp delayed ; its completion urged	23	9
Bund should be completed as soon as possible	24	10
Number of inhabitants at South Point	25	10
Public Buildings	26	10
Aberdeen, how situated	27	10
Phoenix Bay Bund	28	11
Population	29	11
Buildings	30	11
Haddo	31	11
Dense jungle near the Hospital	32	11
Population	33	12
Buildings	34	12
Navy Bay	35	12
Good culturable land between Aberdeen and Navy Bay; its occupation recommended by the Committee	36	12
Mount Harriet originally intended as a Sanitarium	37	13
Government gardens neglected	38	13
Population	39	13
Buildings	40	13
Chatham ; Steam Saw Mill here	41	13
Hospital overcrowded	42	14
Refugee Prince Mengoondine	43	14
Population	44	14
Buildings	45	14
Viper	46	14
Population	47	15
Buildings	48	15
rt Mount and its several stations	49	15
Buildings	50	16
ant Augusta	51	16
ulation	52	16
h of convict system in vogue	53	16
convicts obtain their subsistence money and food	54	18
ce of Rules	55	18
rance of convicts	56	19
y Committee assembled	57	19
t Surgeon Gamack's Report and Mortuary Returns	58	19
te in 1866 over 10½ per cent., and Report of Committee	59	21
le causes	60	21
out men drafted from Indian Jails to die	61	21
om Bombay and Madras generally unhealthy	62	21
572 deaths from want of nutritious food	63	22
Deficient supply of animal food	64	22
Absence of vegetables arises from negligence	65	22
Cultivation in a state of stagnation	66	23
Return of land cultivated at each station	67	23
Total quantity of land under cultivation	68	24
Variety of vegetables at the Exhibition on Ross Island	69	24
Cultivation of Guinea Grass, a food for cattle	70	24
Direction in which to extend Settlement	71	24
Good land for paddy cultivation. Brigade Creek ; proposal to cultivate it	72	25
Diet	73	27

SUBJECT.	Para.	Page.
What ingredients obtainable, and what difficult to procure ...	74	27
1,500 convicts on Settlement who will eat anything ...	75	27
Messing system recommended ...	76	28
Better arrangements to be made for supply of fish ...	77	28
Anticipated results ...	78	28
The retention of Port Mouat particularly treated on ...	79	29
Recommendation of Committee ...	80	29
Prisoners in excess of recommendation of Committee to be withdrawn at once ...	81	29
Port Mouat prematurely developed; total abandonment not advisable, recommended to be made a self-supporting Settlement ...	82	29
Convicts anxious to get married ...	83	30
Andaman Homes ...	84	30
Commissariat ...	85	30
Stores, when received, not checked as to quantity ...	86	31
Godowns encumbered with articles not absolutely necessary for convicts, and supplies lavish ...	87	31
System of issuing stores at Port Blair objectionable ...	88	31
New Form of Indent instituted, and Rules issued... ..	89	31
Wastage ...	90	32
Commissariat accommodation ...	91	32
How supplies should generally be obtained ...	92	32
Freightage should be taken into account ...	93	33
Quotation of prices not always sufficient ...	94	33
Supplies of Rice—British Burnah Rice more nutritious than the Calcutta Rice ...	95	33
Cattle and Sheep farm ...	96	33
Some points require notice. Old cattle shipped ...	97	33
Sheep penned on the borders of a swamp; pigs on the hill ...	98	34
Cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs do well if looked after ...	99	34
Removal of cattle and sheep sheds recommended ...	100	34
Some means should be adopted to insure proper cattle and sheep being shipped, and due care taken of them during the voyage... ..	101	34
Average out-turn of meat ...	102	34
Price of Beef and Mutton ...	103	34
Rate proposed to be raised for the future for free residents ...	104	34
For clothing of convicts, Government hitherto guided by Superintendent ...	105	35
Cost of clothing convicts last year ...	106	35
Clothing seen at muster parade on 1st May ...	107	35
Clothing does not nearly represent cost ...	108	35
No books kept, rough memo. alone produced, and the Commissariat Officer keeps no account of breadth and length of cloth issued ...	109	35
Committee recommend three suits per man be continued. Rangoon Jail muster of clothing proposed; saving which will accrue ...	110	36
Convicts should wear Government clothing ...	111	36
Communication ...	112	36
Recommends sale or transfer of schooners, and purchase of a barque of about 400 to 450 tons ...	113	36
The supply of ballast for vessels difficult ...	114	37
Ballasting vessels cost the Government great loss of convict labor ...	115	37
Steamer <i>Diana</i> , recommended to be sold and a small tug purchased ...	116	37
Situation of Circuit House ...	117	37
Sites chosen for Clerks' lines defective ...	118	37
Burial ground, Ross, where situated. Wells liable to suffer from proximity to burial ground; recommends that it be closed ...	119	37
Andaman tokens; number coined ...	120	38
Amount of silver imported ...	121	38
Large amount of coin now in the Settlement ...	122	38
Non-success of the token system; bribery and hoarding flourish ...	123	38
Captains of vessels could import silver, and how ...	124	38
Advantage of the scheme for a separate coinage, doubtful ...	125	39
Self-supporting system falls short of its object ...	126	39
Lowering of legal price for vegetables noted on ...	127	39
Each self-supporter only allowed to practice one trade ...	128	40
The services of Burmese prisoners are not made the most of ...	129	40
On the sufficiency of the present allowance to prisoners ...	130	40
Daily cost of prisoners in Rangoon Jail ...	131	40
Some items enumerated which should not be paid for by prisoners ...	132	40
Price of vegetables too high ...	133	40
Means to be taken to see that convicts eat the meat they purchase ...	134	40
Fish should be cheaper ...	135	40
Dr. Kelly's idea for procuring fish ...	136	40
Money allowance need not be raised ...	137	40
Marine stores, too much kept in hand; alterations suggested ...	138	41
List of accumulation of some articles ...	139	42
Flogging convicts ...	140	42
The system of Overseers inflicting corporal punishment ...	141	42
Financial. Actual cost of Port Blair cannot be actually arrived at, as the Superintendent omits many heavy items ...	142	42
Means of raising Imperial Revenue very limited at present ...	143	43
Cost of Garrison ...	144	43
The Police has a Military organization ...	145	44
Convict Police... ..	146	44
" " their duties ...	147	44
Distribution of Convict Police ...	148	44
The continuation of this force not recommended ...	149	45

SUBJECT.	Para.	Page.
Other arrangements proposed	150	45
Parawallahs, and their duties	151	45
General Police question considered in Committee	152	45
Superintendent's Office Establishment	153	46
Superintendent overburdened with details	154	46
Treasury recommended to be handed over to Assistant Superintendent	155	46
Treasury and Court work only nominal	156	46
Revised Establishment of free Clerks proposed	157	47
Forest operations insignificant	158	47
Proposal to cut roads through the jungle	159	48
Recommendations	160	48
Land occupied by Mr. Green required for Commissariat godowns. The formation of a Committee recommended to value the property	161	48
Return of Detachments; arrangements to be left to Superintendent	162	49
The Commander of the <i>Assam Valley</i> and some of her crew murdered on Little Andamans	163	49
Result of expedition of Her Majesty's Steamer <i>Sylvia</i>	164	49
Her Majesty's Steam Ship <i>Kwantung</i> despatched to search	165	49
Lieutenant Duncan steamed round to the eastward and effected a landing, but the party was attacked	166	50
Her Majesty's Steam Ship <i>Arracan</i> despatched, and landing effected on the 6th May... ..	167	50
Heroic conduct of Dr. Douglas and party	168	50
Discovery of the bodies of the murdered Europeans	169	51
Further operations considered	170	51
The Burmese Refugee Prince, Meng-goon-dine	171	51
Vegetable supply	172	51
Concluding remarks. Importance of the Andaman Islands	173	52
Services of Officers	174	53



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MAY 1867.

1. PREAMBLE.—In accordance with the instructions received from the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah, I left Rangoon for Moulmein in the *Cashmere*, en route to Port Blair, at 6 A. M., on Sunday, the 7th April 1867, accompanied by Assistant Surgeon W. P. Kelly, Superintendent of the Rangoon Central Jail. We arrived at Moulmein at 8 A. M., on Monday, the 9th, and left again at 4 P. M., on 10th, on board the *Arrakan*, with the store ship *Zurich* in tow, and proceeded on our voyage as far as Natmoo; got under weigh at daylight on the 11th; and reached "Fishing village" that evening; under weigh next morning at daylight and cleared "Amherst," at the mouth of the Moulmein river, by noon on the 12th, and arrived at Port Blair at 8 A. M., on 15th April.

2. *Arrival at Port Blair.*—After breakfast I landed with Assistant Surgeon Kelly. We called on the Superintendent, Lieutenant Colonel B. Ford, where we remained until the "Circuit Bungalow" (which had been turned into a private residence) was prepared for us to remove into.

3. *Physical Characteristics of the Andamans.*—The Andaman Islands consist chiefly of hillocks in close proximity, and of moderate sized hills with peculiar serrations; intervening are valleys, and here and there some tolerably flat country, the remainder is mangrove swamp.

These islands have been upheaved from the bottom of the ocean by some vast convulsion of nature, in an age far too distant to be recorded. They must have remained for years barren rocks, until influenced by the action of the air, heat, and rain, the softer portions of the outer surfaces having crumbled, rolled down the sides, and the debris thus accumulating in process of time, filled the fissures and chasms on the slopes of the hills, and ultimately the valleys also became sufficiently reclaimed from their normal state, to afford nourishment to the lowest order of tropical vegetation, the germs of which were probably washed ashore, or received from the deposit of birds alighting on the rocks. The weeds and grasses thus germinated, perishing in natural course, afforded in time sufficient nourishment for shrubs and trees of larger growth, and so the process has continued, until we now see before us in all directions, forests of trees of gigantic height, densely surrounded with many descriptions of under-wood and creepers, which combine to create a jungle scarcely to be equalled for its density and unhealthiness in any part of the Eastern world. The former physi-

cal characteristics of the country, remain but partially modified even at the present day ; for, notwithstanding the lapse of years, though we find in the valleys, soil in some abundance and also in the low-lands, yet on the tops and sides of the craggy hills, little soil exists, except that retained by the roots of trees and shrubs, or banked up by rocks, which crop up in all directions ; these seem to support the soil in its place, and check the effect of inter-tropical rains ; but once removed, the soil—being composed of light friable substance—gives way, and is washed down. Better would it have been, could another half century have been allowed to elapse before steps were taken to make these islands the home of civilized man, by which time the existing forests would have yielded to the influence of nature's laws, and the trees and brushwood would have become levelled to the ground, and decaying add such additional substance to the soil, as would afford ample depth of earth for cultivation. But red-handed mutiny, with its accompaniments of rapine and rebellion stepped in, and the British Indian Government claimed the Andaman Islands in all their immaturity. The hands of felons will now be tasked, not only to make the soil yield fruit, which otherwise, in course of time, would have proved a labor of easy attainment, but also actually to preserve the soil. This must be borne in mind, for scarcity and friability of soil are peculiar features of these islands, and will be referred to frequently in the following pages.

4. *Geographical position and importance of Port Blair as a Harbour.*—Port Blair in N. L. 11-42 and E. L. 93-0, is situated on the S. E. shore of South Andaman Island. It contains one of the most perfect harbours in the world ; half the British Navy might here ride secure from tempest and attack ; while its central position in the Bay of Bengal, gives it immense advantage as a place of rendezvous for a fleet ; had it been given to man to lay out a port (after inspecting the whole world), he could not have exceeded the beneficence of nature, as displayed in the local adaptations of Port Blair. Stretching athwart the mouth of the harbour, lies "Ross Island," running nearly north and south, with a passage into the harbour on either side ; its centre ridge is of sufficient elevation to command the adjacent promontories on the main land, and in the bay, between Ross and these promontories, were the commanding points properly armed, no hostile fleet could live an hour. Ross itself might easily be made impregnable, as regards its own defence, and its means of protecting shipping in the port might be made perfect.

5. *Formation, abandonment, and re-occupation of the Settlement.*—A Settlement was first established here under orders of the Indian Government in 1789, as a Convict Settlement, by Lieutenant Blair, of Her Majesty's Royal Navy. It was, however, abandoned in 1793, on account of its unhealthiness, and the convicts were transferred to the Straits Settlement of "Penang ;" but, after the mutiny and rebellion of 1857, in Bengal, was suppressed, the Settlement was re-occupied by Doctor Walker as a penal colony for mutineers and transported felons in March 1858, at which date were disembarked 1000 convicts, who occupied the temporary accommodations prepared for their reception, under the superintendence of Captain Mann. The mutineer element has now nearly died out, and the Settlement is replenished by convicts from the Jails of Bengal, Madras, Bombay, and British Burmah.

6. *General view of the position of the several stations of the Settlement.*—Looking to the left from the "Circuit House" on Ross Island, the station of "South Point" is observable (distant $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile), where clearing has recently commenced ; then further towards the west, is an inlet which extends to the promontory of "Aberdeen" (distant $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile). This inlet is being bunded, and when this work is accomplished, some land fit for rice cultivation will be reclaimed. "Aberdeen" is a bold and picturesque knoll, some 40 feet high. Further up to the west is another inlet called "Phoenix Bay," beyond which the station of "Haddo" appears, (distant 2 miles from Ross) jutting out into the main bay, cutting off from view the turn which it takes towards the south-

west, where "Viper Island (distant 5 miles from Ross) is situated. Looking from the Circuit house towards the right, "North Point" (distant $1\frac{1}{4}$ mile from Ross) first catches the eye, then comes "Perseverance Point" (distant 1 mile from Ross), beyond which is an inlet where "Hope Town" (2 miles from Ross) is situated, (the landing place for Mount Harriet station). Further on is "Command Point" (distant $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles from Ross), and still more to the west is "South Point" (distant $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Ross); and beyond "Shore Point" (distant $4\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Ross), comes "Brigade Creek" (distant $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Ross). In front lies the island of Chatham ($2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Ross) situated nearly in mid channel but nearer to the southern shore. The far west shore of the bay is backed by a range of hills of moderate height, extending from "Dundas Point," on the south, in a northerly direction to "Brigade Creek." Passing "Chatham" island, and pulling in a south-westerly direction, the visitor passes "Navy Bay," $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Ross station on the left, then "Viper Island," 5 miles from Ross, and at the extreme head of the bay is "Prospect Hill," at the foot of which runs "Progress Creek," $7\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Ross. The landing place here is named Homfray's Ghat, and here the traveller for the station of "Port Mouat" disembarks; near this is some cultivated ground distinguished by the name of "Woodlands." On turning to the west (to cross the peninsular between "Homfray's Ghat" and "Port Mouat") we reach "Garden Hill;" here and there, at intervals on the road across the isthmus, a self-supporter's hut is visible. After walking nearly two miles along a road made through a dense jungle "Tyttler's Ghat" ($9\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Ross) is reached, which is the landing place of the harbour of "Port Mouat," and across the bay (looking west from "Tyttler's Ghat") lies our most distant station called "Mount Augusta," (distant 12 miles from Ross) where some cultivation is carried on.

7. *First impressions, and review of the general progress of the Settlement.*—On taking a survey of the Settlement from "Ross Island," the first impression which strikes the eye, is, the little apparent progress which has hitherto been made in clearing the adjacent country of jungle: this impression is not relieved by further investigation, and it must be admitted that the progress of improvement in this particular has been very slow. The fact of the matter seems to be, that, (from some infatuation in search of novelty) no sooner has one spot been reclaimed from jungle and made somewhat fit for human habitation, than the operation has been repeated in some opposite direction, just as if a strong fortress could be best taken by feebly attacking one point, and then, when some slight impression had been made, to abandon the vantage gained, and commence an assault on a distant, but equally strong, position. The consequence is, just what might have been anticipated; no appreciable progress has been made, and as the issue proves, no great work is completed; in fact the halt in pushing on objects of the highest importance, while trivial matters gain undue attention, is but too apparent. It thus comes to pass that, notwithstanding the large supply of labor existing on the Settlement, every department which has an important work in hand, is clamorous for additional operatives. Years roll on, and embankments which are admitted to be of vital importance to health, and which when completed would enable the Settlements to become partially self-supporting, are merely nibbled at, and the want of that sustained perseverance on any one work, which alone can ensure the accomplishment of a steady purpose, is apparent. The planting of wholesome trees, to replace the worthless ones cut down, and the production of which is not only essential to the welfare of the Settlement in a sanitary point of view, but, absolutely requisite in certain places for the preservation of the scanty amount of soil, and to prevent the place again degenerating to its pristine state of barrenness, is not sufficiently considered. Sheds for the protection of cattle are neglected, and fish, though abounding in the bay, is so scarce, that it cannot be looked upon as a staple article of food. To be just to the present Superintendent (Lieutenant Colonel B. Ford) he did not com-

mence such a system,—many and distant were the stations commenced on, before his arrival; many the efforts made to overcome difficulties and attain results only to be obtained as the fruits of years of patient toil; but while this is true as regards general progress and development, the Settlement, like an overforced plant, wears under premature advancement, in less urgent directions. We see a stupendous structure of stone being erected at the cost of an immense amount of labor, while a bund across an inlet of the sea cannot be completed, nor ground cleared wherewithal to obtain the means of cultivating a sufficient supply of vegetable produce, for a population suffering from scorbutic diseases; and notwithstanding the increasing demand for labor, we see convict servants and orderlies allowed in immoderate numbers, and many healthy men withdrawn from hard labor and employed in various petty ways; meanwhile, the everlasting jungle rears its defiant head, mocking the puny attacks made to lower its pride. Such are the impressions which strike the visitor on first arriving at this Convict Settlement, where he expected to find penal servitude in all its rigorous forms, and such are the convictions he will take away with him.

8. *Description of Ross Island.*—Ross Island is about 1,500 yards in length and 600 yards in breadth at the widest part, and has an area of 82 acres. Its general features represent an irregular ridge, on the highest part of which is situated the Superintendent's house, 146 feet above the sea. The only level low ground is on the west side. It is here where the Commissariat godowns and Engineer's yard are established, the space for which is very circumscribed. The appearance of Ross Island from the anchorage within the bay is extremely interesting; the imposing appearance of the houses on the ridge of the island, and the neatness of the self-supporters' huts (half hidden in a fringe of cocoanut trees), on the sea side, give an air of homeliness and comfort to the scene, quite foreign to what one would anticipate seeing in a Penal Settlement.

9. *Fair progress made in the planting of trees.*—The first occupiers truly estimated the value of trees, and planting has been pretty fairly continued on Ross Island by their successors. The result is, a fair collection of trees of many varieties, but there is still room for more, and they are much required as a means of preserving the soil and water.

10. *Return of trees, &c., on the Island.*—The following is a list of the exotic trees now in existence on the island:—

Return of Exotic Fruit Trees, Shrubs, and Flowers (including Forest and Ornamental young trees), now in existence on Ross Island, Port Blair.

120	Rate.	
150	Beetlenut	
140	Jack.	
360	Lemon.	
270	Limes.	
220	Mangoe	
201	Guava.	
40	Plum.	
201	Gooseberry.	
2066	Plantain.	
21	Pomegranate.	
208	Orange.	
1409	Cocoanut.	
41	Tamarind.	
60	Peepul or Deedar.	
859	Popeta.	
110	Bread Fruit Tree	
1065	Coffee.	
	Cotton.	
100	Sajana or Drumstick.	
40	Gangee plum.	
2641	Rose trees of various species.	
2440	Flowers of various species.	
100	Cunfoo or Forest trees (large.)	
520	Cunjoo or Ornamental trees (young.)	
300	Bamboo.	
100	Shrubs of various kinds.	
50	Marians or Cherry.	

The specimens which have been planted, have thrived amazingly well, and where the soil has not been washed away, which is the case in almost all portions of this exposed island, the spontaneity of vegetable growth, is as conspicuous as in the most favored and fruitful of inter-tropical regions.

11. *On Ross Island are Head Quarters of Departments.*—On Ross Island are stationed the Head Quarters of the several Settlement Departments. Here also are located the European Troops, a Company of Madras Sappers and some free Police. The Commissariat supplies, Executive Engineer's and Marine stores are also deposited here. There is a Government Mess house for the use of the Officers, both Civil and Military. There is also a Circuit house, but it is at present unfurnished.

12. *Population and Garrison.*—The following table will show the strength of the force, as also the number of free and prisoner population on this island on the 17th April 1867 :—

European Troops.	Sappers.	Police.	Officials and Free residents.	Marine.	Prisoners of all classes.
111	128	60	371	20	2,380

There are a couple of small brass carronades placed at the European barracks, but they are not kept loaded; there are no Artillery men attached to the Settlement. This subject will be noted on when treating of Police.

13. *Quarters and Buildings.*—All the European residents, the troops, police, and prisoners, are quartered in wooden houses or barracks, with shingled roofs. Owing to the crowded state of the island (attributed by the Superintendent to the demand for labor in the Public Works Department, chiefly required in the construction of the large stone barracks), many prisoners are located in the temporary barracks, with mat walls and thatched roofs. The self-supporters also live in thatched cottages of a prescribed pattern.

The following is a Register of Buildings on Ross Island up to 31st March 1867 :—

Permanent or Temporary.	Names of Buildings.	For what purpose.
Permanent	Superintendent's Bungalow ...	Superintendent's residence.
"	8 Angle-iron Barracks ...	Convicts.
"	1 Barrack for European Non-Commissioned Officers ...	Military.
"	1 ditto for European Troops ...	Ditto.
"	1 ditto for Sappers' Hospital ...	Ditto.
"	1 General Hospital ...	Civil.
"	1 European Infantry Hospital ...	Military.
"	1 Native Infantry ditto ...	Ditto.
"	Executive Engineer's Bungalow ...	Civil.
"	" Cook House ...	Ditto.
"	Assistant Superintendent's Bungalow ...	Ditto.
"	" Cook House ...	Ditto.
"	Commissariat Officer's Bungalow ...	Military.
"	" Cook House ...	Ditto.
"	Assistant Engineer's Bungalow... ..	Civil.
"	" Cook House ...	Ditto.
"	Officer Commanding Sappers and Miners ...	Military.
"	" Cook House ...	Ditto.

Permanent or Temporary.	Names of Buildings.	For what purpose.
Permanent	Apothecary's Bungalow ...	Civil.
"	" Cook House ...	Ditto.
"	Commissariat Sergeants Bungalow ...	Ditto.
"	D. P. Works Overseer's Bungalow ...	Ditto.
"	" Cook House ...	Ditto.
"	Settlement Overseer's Bungalow ...	Ditto.
"	" Cook House ...	Ditto.
"	Officer Commanding European Troops ...	Military.
"	" Cook House ...	Ditto.
"	Senior Medical Officer's Bungalow ...	Ditto.
"	" Cook House ...	Ditto.
"	Settlement Accountant's Bungalow ...	Civil.
"	" Cook House ...	Ditto.
"	Harbour Master's Bungalow ...	Ditto.
"	" Cook House ...	Ditto.
"	European Infantry Subaltern's Bungalow...	Military.
"	" Cook House..	Ditto.
"	Harbour Master's Office ...	Civil.
"	Bungalow occupied by 3 Clerks...	Ditto.
"	Cook House ...	Ditto.
"	Commissariat Sergeant's Bungalow ...	Civil.
"	Chaplain's Bungalow ...	Ditto.
"	Cook House ...	Ditto.
"	D. P. Works Accountant's Bungalow ...	Ditto.
"	4 Cook Rooms ...	Ditto.
"	Barrack occupied by European troops ...	Military.
"	2 " Native Infantry ...	Ditto.
"	2 Corrugated iron Godowns ...	Civil (Commissariat.)
"	3 Shingled " " ...	Ditto.
"	Commissariat Office and Store ...	Ditto.
"	Medical Store ...	Civil.
"	Bakery ...	Ditto.
"	Kotwallee and Lock-up ...	Ditto.
"	Convict Hospital ...	Ditto.
"	Rum Godown ...	Commissariat.
"	Magazine (old) ...	Military.
"	5 Latrines ...	Ditto.
"	1 Latrine ...	Civil.
"	1 Latrine ...	Convicts.
"	Mess House ...	Military.
"	Bowling Alley ...	Ditto.
"	2 Cook Rooms ...	Ditto.
"	Bungalow for free Constables ...	Civil.
"	Cook House ...	Ditto.
"	Circuit House and Cook House...	Ditto.
"	Deputy Superintendent's Bungalow ...	Ditto.
"	" Cook House ...	Ditto.
"	Barrack for Marine Service ...	Ditto.
"	Cook House ...	Ditto.
"	Latrine ...	Ditto.
"	2 Corrugated iron Cook Houses ...	Convicts.
"	Punishment Cells ...	Military.
"	Magazine (new) ...	Ditto.

Besides the above, there are many temporary barracks and buildings, which are not enumerated.

14. *Erection of Stone Barracks.*—The stone barrack above alluded to, will be a magnificent structure; it was designed by Mr. H. Prince, C. E., when Executive Engineer of the Port Blair Settlement. It is intended to accommodate

one company of Europeans, besides quarter guard, &c., &c. It was commenced in September 1864, one half is expected to be completed (except the stone floors) in July next. Up to April 1867, the following shows the number of men employed in constructing what is completed of the one half:—

Chinese.	Sappers.	Mistries.	Convicts.	Total.
3,423	26,713	17,378	1,59,238	2,06,752

The over-crowded state of Ross Island, above referred to, does not, however, arise alone from the number of hands employed in building the stone barrack, as will be seen from the correspondence noted in the

No. 51, dated 29th April 1867, from Lt. Col. Ford, to Major Davies.

No. 829, dated 27th April, from Surgeon Cowie, to Lt. Colonel Ford.

No. 833, dated 27th April, from Surgeon Cowie, to Lt. Col. Ford.

No. 29, dated 27th April, from Lt. Col. Ford, to Surgeon Cowie.

No. 513, dated 6th May, from Major Davis, to Lt. Col. Ford.

No. 126, dated 8th May, from Lt. Col. Ford, to Major Davies.

margin, where the Medical men of the Settlement have urged the necessity of an immediate decrease in the inhabitants. The propriety of completing the stone barrack more leisurely, on account of the demand for labor in other parts of the Settlement, was suggested to the Superintendent. From his reply it will be seen, he considers the remainder of the work might be completed by the Sappers, aided by 100 convicts; this would give several hundred convicts, who could be made available, for clearing operations. The free laborers might also be kept on. Considering the present stagnation in cultivating the soil, and dilatoriness in rearing vegetables (as will be noted on hereafter), it might be advisable to restrict the number of convicts to be employed on this particular work, especially as the existing quarters of the European soldiers are in good condition, and will last for several years, and the men are healthy.

15. *Return of Self-supporters on Ross Island.*—The number of servants, and petty officers and self-supporters connected with the Settlement might be reduced. The following is a return showing the number of adult convict self-supporters on Ross, and their trades.

Return showing the several occupations of self-supporters and their trades on Ross Island on 1st May 1867.

Shop-keepers	...	...	...	...	13
Fishermen	...	...	...	...	8
Barbers	...	...	...	...	5
Dhobies	...	...	...	...	4
Tailors	...	...	...	...	4
Bhcesties	...	...	...	...	2
Bunneahs	...	...	...	...	3
Carters	...	...	...	...	4
Cobblers	...	...	...	...	3
Milk sellers	...	...	...	...	2
Tobacconist	...	...	...	...	1
Soda water maker	...	...	...	...	1
Tin-smith	...	...	...	...	1
Brazier	...	...	...	...	1
Sweet-meat makers	...	...	...	...	2
Silver-smiths	...	...	...	...	2
Screen maker	...	...	...	...	1
Charcoal burner	...	...	...	...	1
Beetle seller	...	...	...	...	1

Carried over ... 59

			Brought forward	...	59
Dyer	...	...	...	...	1
Corn grinder	...	...	...	...	1
Cook	...	...	...	...	1
Poulterer	...	...	...	...	1
Carpenter	...	...	...	...	1
Writer	...	...	...	...	1
Bamboo cutter	...	...	...	...	1
General dealer	...	...	...	...	1
Total				...	67

16. *Schools—European, Eurasian, and Asiatics.*—There are three schools on Ross Island, one for the children of Europeans and Eurasians, another for Asiatic children of free parents, and a third for children of convicts. The daily average number of children in attendance, over 7 years of age, is as follows :—

European Free School.	Asiatic School.	Convict boys.	Total.	REMARKS.
7	7	10	24	

The school for the children of free Europeans is at present held in a building which is also used as the temporary church : this building will suffice very well for the above purposes, until the new church, which is being built of stone, is completed, when the site of the present temporary church and school will be available for a new school house of moderate dimensions. The school houses for the children of Asiatics, free people, and convicts, are well adapted for the purpose, and are in good repair.

17. *The suspension of building a new School house suggested.*—On the representations of the Superintendent, it has been in contemplation to commence erecting a new school house this year, the cost of which is estimated to reach over Rs. 20,000. Such an expensive building is not at all requisite at present, and it is submitted, that in view of the Public Works Department having to purchase Mr. Green's house, probably for some 20,000 Rupees, the erection of a new school house might be advantageously postponed for a year or two.

18. *Healthiness of Ross Island, and the detention of convicts on first arrival.*—On account of the healthiness of Ross Island, it has been the practice to retain prisoners on their first arrival at the Settlement, from 3 to 6 months, with the view of acclimatizing them, previous to employing them in jungle clearing. No regulation has, however, existed as to whether their duration of probation on Ross should be prolonged, curtailed, or dispensed with, with reference to the season of the year in which the prisoners arrive, and the idea seems to be gaining ground, that prisoners who arrive in a robust state during the healthy season, might, without any disadvantage, be employed in cultivating the ground, and would incur less risk than prisoners who had suffered somewhat in health from long residence in the Settlement.

19. *Water.*—The supply of water on Ross is becoming less, and is a matter for serious consideration. The prisoners had very good reason to complain of scarcity during the last hot season, though the Superintendent does not appear to have been aware of the fact, or if he was, did not pay that attention to the subject which it deserved. I experienced the want of water myself, though several showers fell after my arrival. There is a condensing machine for converting salt water into fresh, but from some portion of the machinery being deficient, it was not used. The thatching in of this machine was recom-

mended to the Superintendent, to preserve the delicate portions of its work from damage. The digging of more wells in Ross, will only afford a precarious supply; dry ones already existed at the close of the hot season. Planting shrubs to check the rainfall from running off is what is most required.

20. *Jetty*.—The Settlement landing place is capable of improvement. At present it consists of a jetty of some 100 feet long, built of wood; the head of this pier lies in about 2 fathoms of water at high tide; at low water no ships can come alongside. As regards being of assistance in the loading and unloading of cargo from ships, by lighters, it is very useful; it is also a great convenience to Settlement officials embarking or disembarking. On enquiry whether it is possible to extend its length, so far as to give 5 or 6 fathoms of water at all times, and thus enable ships to anchor off it, and discharge, it appears that at a distance of 150 feet from the head of the present jetty, there is an uneven rocky bottom, which would render the position of vessels unsafe while lying there, especially in the north-east monsoon. Under these circumstances, either another jetty must be built, or the old plan continued of unloading and loading vessels by the Settlement lighters; this latter is a very tedious and wasteful process. There is a site more convenient and fit for erecting a new jetty, further to the south, off which ships could lie and unload at all seasons.

21. *Conservancy and general arrangements, good*.—The latrines for convicts, and the conservancy arrangements generally, on Ross, are in a very satisfactory state; the only approach to an exception in this, arose from the water of a lavatory attached to the European barracks with which was mixed soap and probably micturation; the gutter formed by this water was not as free from smell as it might be. On the whole, the arrangements on Ross are good, the Superintendent appears to take great pains, and spends much of his time in ornamenting the place and seeing to its efficient conservancy, and the result is highly creditable to him.

22. *South Point, a main land station*.—After having a good look over "Ross," I proceeded to inspect the stations on the main land. In these tours I was always accompanied by the Assistant Superintendent and Doctor Kelly. South Point was the first visited. Its situation will be best understood, from a glance at the map, and from a general description given in the commencement of this report. It is distant from Ross Island 1,420 yards. Some clearing has been accomplished here, estimated by the Executive Engineer at 7 acres. A sufficient number of trees have been left standing, but fresh ones should be planted, ready to take their place; for the forest trees soon fade away and die, when deprived of the protection of the sun afforded by the undergrowth, and trees once gone, away goes the soil. Many felled logs remain to be cut up, and nearly all the ground has to be stumped; there is however still space available for planting during this coming season. The Superintendent proposes planting the cleared ground this month (June) with paddy. I predict that nothing worthy of consideration will be done in the way of growing paddy at "South Point" itself; moreover, the stock of paddy plants was insignificant. It would appear the clearing operations at South Point were commenced in February 1866, but temporarily stopped, it is asserted, in consequence of labor being required for more urgent work.

23. *The bunding in of a Mangrove Swamp delayed; its completion urged*.—Between "South Point" and "Aberdeen" lies a mangrove swamp, which has proved very deleterious to the convicts located on Aberdeen. To reclaim this swamp, it became necessary that two bunds should be erected, one across bund which cuts off a portion of the sea to the eastward; this has been completed, it is about 80 yards in length, 6 feet in width, and 3 feet in height.

It was commenced in January 1865, and finished in December of the same year. The land enclosed (only a few acres) proved to be bason shaped, so that though the bund excluded the salt water, when it became filled with fresh, the water had no means of running off, consequently the ground thus reclaimed, is almost useless, as it becomes a stagnant fresh water swamp. It is on the margin of this swamp that the sheep sheds are situated, of which more will be said hereafter. The second bund was only commenced on the 21st of March 1867, and on an average 47 men have been employed daily on this work. It is a labor of no great magnitude, and both in a sanitary and reproductive point of view, it is of great importance that it should be finished. The area which will be reclaimed is estimated to be about 150 acres. The Superintendent estimates that with the same number of convicts as hitherto employed, it would take nine months to finish this bund. From my own observations, I should consider it would take much longer.

24. *Bund should be completed as soon as possible.*—There is no good reason shown, why a sufficient number of convicts was not concentrated on this work, to complete it during the past hot season; as it is, what has been effected is useless. Until the whole is completed, malaria will continue to be produced for another year, and more sickness will result from this dilatoriness, than if the work had been systematically grappled with, and finished out of hand. Not more than one quarter of the work had been completed when the rains set in, and the fever season commenced, the result was, Surgeon Cowie (then the Senior Medical Officer of the Settlement) suspended the work for a time. It will be seen from the report of the Sanitary Committee, that they urge the completion of this work at the earliest possible period.

25. *Number of inhabitants at South Point.*—The number of Police and self-supporters stationed at "South Point," and their occupation, are as follows; the number of gangsmen and laboring convicts is also shown—

Police	...	...	...	...	...	12
Self-supporters—						
Cultivators	...	...	...	...	...	2
Milkmen	..	...	...	...	...	6
Salt-maker	..	...	...	...	...	1
Tanner	...	...	...	...	...	1
Potters	...	...	...	...	...	2
Woodcutters	...	...	...	...	...	7
Gram seller	...	...	...	...	...	1
Barber	...	...	...	...	...	1
Poulterer	...	...	...	...	...	1
Fishermen	...	...	...	...	...	2
Bunneah	...	...	...	...	...	1
Washerman	...	...	...	...	...	1
Sweetmeat maker	...	...	...	...	...	1
Charcoal burner	...	...	...	...	...	1
					—	30
Gangsmen	...	...	...	...	...	14
Laboring convicts	...	...	...	..	...	294
					Total ...	350

26. *Public Buildings.*—There are no public buildings as yet erected on South Point; but owing to Port Mouat being reduced, probably some barracks will shortly be built.

27. *Aberdeen how situated.*—"Aberdeen" is situated to the west of South Point further up the bay. At this station are housed the Commissariat slaughter cattle and sheep; there is also a small model farm for the production of cattle and pigs. There is no doubt but that cattle, pigs, and goats, will, with proper care, thrive admirably at Port Blair. I could not procure full

details regarding the stock farm at "Aberdeen;" but from what I saw, I do not think that as much has been made of it as should have been. "Aberdeen" was first established in 1858; a good number of "Bale" and "Jack" trees have been planted (the work of the first pioneers) which now bear fruit. There is yet room for fifty times as many, and they would not only be useful in themselves, but would purify the air and preserve the soil. The work of planting should be hastened; at present there is a stagnation in this important work.

28. *Phoenix Bay Bund.*—Behind "Aberdeen," in a south-westerly direction, lies a swamp called "Phoenix Bay Swamp," a bund across which (where the salt water forces an entrance into this swamp) was finished about a year ago, but owing to the want of proper outlets for the fresh water, it overflowed and burst the bund. This has been repaired during the past hot season, but up to this day, the sluices have not been put up, and another whole year, pregnant with fever, may have to be endured, as "Aberdeen" must remain unhealthy, until the work is completed. About 100 acres will be reclaimed, suitable for rice cultivation, when the mangrove has rotted away.

29. *Population.*—The number of Police, gangsmen, and self-supporters stationed at Aberdeen are as follows :—

Police	...	...	...	...	34
Self-supporters—					
Fishermen	...	...	...	...	4
Barbers	...	...	...	...	3
Dhobies	...	...	...	...	2
Bunneahs	...	...	...	...	2
Caterer	...	...	...	...	1
Cobbler	...	...	...	...	1
Milk sellers	...	...	...	...	5
Sweetmeat maker	...	...	...	...	1
Charcoal burners	...	...	...	...	5
Poulterers	...	...	...	...	2
Grain sellers	...	...	...	...	2
Cultivators	...	...	...	...	58
Woodcutters	...	...	...	...	13
Masala sellers	...	...	...	...	2
Potters	...	...	...	...	2
Salt maker	...	...	...	...	1
					— 104
Gangsmen	...	...	...	...	17
Laboring convicts	...	...	...	...	304
					—
				Total	459

30. *Buildings.*—The following are the buildings at "Aberdeen" :—

- 1 Bungalow for Settlement Overseer.
- 4 Angle-iron barracks (1 used as Police barrack).
- 1 Receiving hospital.
- 1 Barrack for free police.
- 1 Corrugated iron cook-house.
- 1 Ditto ditto ditto.

31. *Haddo.*—This station was commenced on the 19th July 1862, but it has since been extended more westerly. Here are 4 angle-iron barracks. A good number of married convicts live here. A large hospital capable of holding 200 sick has been built. The site was selected by the late Senior Medical Officer. The site itself is not objectionable, as it stands high, but it seems a mistake crowding so many sick into one building, and would have been preferable had it been divided.

32. *Dense jungle near the Hospital.*—At present a dense jungle surrounds the hospital on the south-west side, and little or no effort is being made to get rid of it. I brought this to the notice of the Superintendent, as on my visit, I

found on enquiry from the Overseer, only from 10 to 20 men were ordinarily employed on this important work ; the Superintendent explained, that on the occasion of my visit there, the paucity of prisoners then employed on jungle clearings, was attributable to a number of men being engaged in moving the Steamer *Diana*, but on calling for a report from the Assistant Superintendent, found the average for the past year to be about the same as stated by the Overseer.

33. *Population.*—The number of Police and self-supporters stationed at “Haddo,” and their occupations, also the number of gangsmen and laboring convicts is shown below :—

Police	40
Self-supporters—	
Fishermen	4
Barbers	2
Dhobies	3
Bunneahs	2
Cobbler	1
Milk sellers... .. .	2
Sweetmeat maker	1
Grain seller	1
General dealers	65
Rattan chair maker	1
	— 82
Gangsmen	32
Laboring convicts	356
	—
Total	510

34. *Buildings.*—The following buildings are on Haddo :—

- 4 Anglo-iron barracks.
- Settlement Overseer's bungalow.
- Ditto ditto cook house.
- 1 Receiving hospital.
- 4 Corrugated iron cook houses.
- School house for children.
- 1 Barrack for free police.
- Hospital for 20 patients.

35. *Navy Bay.*—Rounding the promontory on which “Haddo” stands and working up the bay to the south, at about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile distance, is situated the station of “Navy Bay.” The number of public buildings here is 4 barracks ; there are also 14 self-supporters' huts. There is also a police force of 18 men who are separately accommodated. “Navy Bay” is connected with “Aberdeen,” by a fair weather road, over the neck of land of which “Haddo” forms the promontory.

36. *Good culturable land between Aberdeen and Navy Bay ; its occupation recommended by Committee.*—The greater part of the land lying on either side of this road between “Aberdeen” and “Navy Bay” is of excellent quality ; much of it is a valley, and it is greatly to be regretted that other sites have been sought for, at a greater distance from the Head Quarters at “Ross,” instead of this valley being cleared and cultivated. Along the road are scattered on the Aberdeen side, several self-supporting cultivators ; they have with great labor cleared, each, from one to two beegahs of land ; they do not however seem to be very thriving. The soil when cleared is fruitful enough to enable them with little effort to rear sufficient vegetables, from the sale of which they could purchase fish and other necessities, and the bazaar at “Ross Island” offers a ready sale for all that could be produced ; yet for some reason or other,

well placed as these cultivators are, neither do they appear well to do, nor is the Sudder Bazar well supplied with provisions. It will be seen from the report of the Committee, how strongly they have recommended the extension of cultivation, in this valley, in preference to any other site.

37. *Mount Harriet originally intended as a Sanitarium.*—Mount Harriet, on the northern shore, was originally intended as a Sanitarium. At certain times, the air on the top of the hill is clearer than on the low lands, on the sea coast, but the elevation is too low to give any really beneficial change to an invalid. The ascent is very tedious, and the gradient is so great as to be utterly beyond the efforts of a weak man's strength to accomplish.

38. *Government Gardens neglected.*—I was not altogether satisfied with the state of the Government gardens here. There appeared a want of efficient supervision; this is no doubt partly attributable to the difficulty of access. My remarks as regards pine apple shoots, referred to in the Superintendent's letter No. 29, dated 25th April 1867, had reference, more to the want of ordinary care, in not sedulously propagating a class of fruit, useful as an article of consumption, where vegetables are undoubtedly scarce, than with the view of rearing fine specimens of fruit. Pine apples and plantains flourish on the Andaman soil in the wildest luxuriance, but the measures taken to propagate these and other wholesome fruits, are neglected, or at most but languidly carried out. The number of Police, self-supporters, gangsmen, and laboring convicts, stationed at "Mount Harriet" are as follows :—

39. *Population.*—

Police	...	...	...	...	...	34
Self-supporters—						
Fishermen	...	...	...	...	...	2
Barber	...	...	...	...	...	1
Dhoby	...	...	...	...	...	1
Bunneahs	...	...	...	...	...	3
Caterer	...	...	...	...	...	1
Milk seller	...	...	...	...	...	1
Sweetmeat maker	...	...	...	...	...	1
Poulterer	...	...	...	...	...	1
Grain seller	...	...	...	...	...	1
General dealers	...	...	...	...	...	7
						— 19
Gangsmen	...	...	...	...	...	16
Laboring convicts	...	...	...	...	...	333
						—
					Total	402

40. *Buildings.*—The following buildings are on "Mount Harriet :"—

- 4 Angle-iron barracks for a whole division of convicts.
- 2 Corrugated cook houses ditto.
- 1 Barrack for free police.
- Department Public Works Overseer's bungalow.
- Ditto ditto cook house and a travellers bungalow built of wood, and shingled.

41. *Chatham Steam Saw Mill here.*—At "Chatham" is the Steam Saw Mill belonging to the Public Works Department for converting timber. It appears from all I could learn, that this engine has not always a sufficient supply of timber to feed it. When it is considered how expensive a matter it is importing converted timber, it would seem advisable to ensure a sufficient supply to keep this engine, which has been put up at a great cost, always fully employed.

The Burmese prisoners are found to be the most useful in procuring a supply of forest timber; but they are either not in sufficient numbers to effect this, or their labor is not applied in sufficient force to the work.

42. *Hospital overcrowded*.—At “Chatham” there are two large hospitals; one was much overcrowded when I saw it. I brought this to the notice of the Superintendent. It appears the new hospital at “Haddo,” which will be shortly available, will relieve the building at Chatham sufficiently.

43. *Refugee Prince Mengoondine*.—At Chatham the Mengoondine refugee prince is lodged. His accommodation requires to be improved and enlarged.

44. *Population*.—The number of Police, self-supporters, gangsmen, and laboring convicts stationed at Chatham is as follows:—

Police	...	...	...	...	57
Self-supporters—					
Barber	...	...	...	...	1
Dhoby	...	...	...	...	1
Bunneah	...	...	...	...	1
Milk seller	...	...	...	...	1
Sweetmeat maker	...	...	...	...	1
Corn grinder	...	...	...	...	1
Grain seller	...	...	...	...	1
				—	7
Gangsmen	...	...	...	...	18
Laboring convicts	...	...	...	...	540
				Total	622

45. *Buildings*.—The following buildings are at Chatham:—

- 1 Corrugated iron shed
- 2 Barracks for Native Infantry.
- Civil Surgeon's bungalow.
- Ditto Cook houses.
- Bungalow occupied by Superintendent of Police
- 2 Angle-iron barracks.
- Ditto Apothecary's bungalow.
- Ditto Cook houses.
- Department Public Works Overseer's bungalow.
- Corrugated iron barracks.
- Department Public Works Store-keepers quarters.
- 1 Cook house (masonry).
- 2 Latrines.

and several self-supporters cottages.

46 *Viper*.—“Viper Island” is the station where the chain gang is located. The Convalescent Dépôt is concentrated here. At this station is one of the corrugated iron barracks, of the same pattern as those sent from England to afford barrack accommodation to our troops during the mutiny. Nearly one-half the interior has a sort of upper story; the sick are put up there. When Dr. Kelly and myself visited this hospital, we found the upper story most unpleasant, from the smell which rose from the numerous sick crowded on the lower floor. There is a great want of ventilation, and altogether the arrangements appeared very bad. Some means should be adopted to recover this Island with vegetation as speedily as possible, if not, in a few years it will become a barren rock. The Peepul or some tree with fibrous roots would appear useful. Viper is shut in by hills in all directions. The want of circulation of air is sometimes much felt. The day we visited it, there was a feeling

of closeness in the atmosphere, and it was quite a relief to get out of the place. A large jail is being built here, but unless carefully ventilated, will be unbearable.

47. *Population.*—The number of Police, prisoners stationed at “Viper,” also the self-supporters and their occupations are as follows :—

Police	...	...	...	49
Self-supporters—				
Fishermen	..	...	...	6
Berbers	...	...	...	2
Tailors	...	...	...	1
Bunneah	...	...	...	1
Cobblers	...	...	...	1
Gardeners	...	...	...	3
Milk seller	...	...	...	1
Tobacconist	...	...	...	1
Sweetmeat maker	...	...	...	1
Cook	...	...	...	1
Wood cutter	...	...	...	1
Rattan chair maker	...	...	...	1
				— 20
Gangsmen	...	...	...	47
Laboring convicts	...	...	...	728
				<hr/>
			Total	... 844

48. *Buildings.*—The following buildings are on “Viper Island” :—

- Bungalow occupied by Assistant Engineer.
- Cook house.
- Bungalow occupied by Inspector of Police.
- Cook house.
- Bungalow occupied by Public Works Department Overseer.
- Cook house.
- Bungalow occupied by Apothecary.
- Cook house.
- Bungalow occupied by Officer Commanding Native Infantry.
- Cook house.
- Angle-iron barracks
- 2 Cook rooms (masonry)
- 3 Ditto (corrugated)
- 1 Corrugated iron shed for hospital
- 1 Dead house ditto
- 1 Barrack for free police.
- 1 Latrine.
- 1 Latrine for convicts.
- 1 Barrack, Native Infantry.

49. *Port Mouat and its several stations.*—From “Viper” we proceeded towards Port Mouat. To visit this new station, we went by water to the neck or isthmus at the head of the “Port Blair” Bay. The commencement of what is called the Settlement at “Port Mouat,” is on the east side. Arrived at the shore, at the head of the bay, we first came to a hill called “Prospect Hill,” on which is a Police hut; we pulled a short distance round this hill up “Progress Creek.” The landing place here is called “Homfray’s Ghât.” The first clearing reached, adjacent to the ghât, is called “Woodlands;” this spot has been too much denuded of trees. The Superintendent states that the soil was so cleared to plant cotton; but after this monsoon, I fear in many spots there will be little soil left. About 500 yards further on the road to “Port Mouat,” we came to “Garden Hill,” where a very good style of temporary barrack has been erected. Here resides the gang which is employed in clearing “Woodlands,” and the land about “Garden Hill” itself. The land immediately to the west of “Garden Hill,” and stretching away in a south-westerly direction (that is east of “Port Mouat”) is very good, equal to that

in the valley between "Aberdeen" and "Navy Bay." At this spot the greatest wrestle with nature has been made. Tall trees lie prostrate in the wildest confusion in all directions; the space has been partially cleared, that is, the branches of fallen trees have been disposed of, but the roots and trunks for the most part remain. Seeds have been sown amongst the fallen trees to the extent of several acres. A pathway has been made from "Progress Creek" to "Tytler's Ghat" at Port Mouat." There are two or three self-supporting cultivators located along the road. This road will scarcely be passable in the rains, and it will be a difficult matter to keep up communication across the isthmus, even with the bullocks and ponies they have. At the station of "Port Mouat" itself, no cultivation has, as yet, been commenced.

50. *Buildings*.—The buildings at the several stations which form this settlement, designated (somewhat erroneously) Port Mouat, are of jungle wood, except one "angle-iron" framed barrack which is shingled and used as an hospital, temporary barracks for half a division, and one for police, a house in course of erection for Mr. Homfray, an Apothecary's house, and a few other temporary public buildings are all of jungle wood. Here are also one or two self-supporters.

51. *Mount Augusta*.—Across the bay, which is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile wide, we come to "Mount Augusta," a hillock jutting into the bay. This hill nearly meets a promontory stretching from the opposite shore, and contracts the water-way between the inner and outer harbour. The passage between the two promontories is perhaps between 150 and 200 feet wide, very dangerous to a sailing vessel, for if caught in a slant of wind while passing through, nothing could save her. This is the most distant of all the stations and is about 12 miles from "Ross." At "Mount Augusta" there is a patch of cultivation, consisting of about two acres, planted with vegetables; though it was the height of the hot season, the vegetables were in a very flourishing state.

52. *Population*.—The entire population of the place as it stood on the 1st of May was as follows:—

Police ...	...	...	...	41
Self-supporters—				
Fishermen	...	...	...	4
Barber	...	...	...	1
Bunneah	...	...	...	1
Cobblers	...	...	...	2
Milk seller	...	...	...	1
Sweetmeat maker	...	...	...	1
Potter	...	...	...	1
				— 11
Gangsmen ...	...	...	...	8
Laboring convicts	...	...	...	340
				<hr/>
			Total	... 400

53. *Sketch of Convict system in vogue*.—Having passed in review the several stations, I will now make some observations on the convict system. The general system on which the Penal Settlement of Port Blair is worked, will be best understood from the following epitome collected from information gained on the spot. There are two classes of prisoners on the Settlement.

1st.—Those sent having licenses to be at large. These are Europeans and Eurasians, and a few prisoners of these races.

2nd.—Asiatics, transported as felons. These are from all the nations of India.

The convicts, on arrival, are classed in gangs, after having been medically inspected, and each man verified by his descriptive roll. The sickly are sent to hospital, or to the convalescent gang at Viper; tradesmen, who have means, appear to be separated. Numbers stamped on metal plates are distributed to each. After a certain stay on "Ross" the prisoners are drafted where they may be required. Each station has an overseer who lives there; these are either free men, or prisoners licensed to be at large. The overseer has charge of one or more divisions of convicts, and he renders a daily report of his work to the Superintendent. A division of convicts is constituted as under:—

Division Gangsmen	...	...	...	...	1
Sub-Division do.	...	...	...	...	1
Mohurrir (Clerk)	...	...	...	...	1
Tolidars or sub-gang	...	...	...	...	16
Laboring Convicts	...	...	...	...	400
Total strength of division					419

The 400 laboring convicts as above are divided into 16 sections of 25 each; the first 8 sections are more particularly the division gangsmen's charge, the remaining 8 sections are the sub-division gangsmen's charge, 25 men or a section are a Toledar's charge, but it is the duty of the division gangsmen to exercise a strict supervision over the whole. The duties of keeping the registers of pay, hospital and clothing accounts, &c., &c., devolve on a Mohurrir or convict clerk. The subsistence allowance of prisoners is graduated according to their class.

European prisoners holding a license on arrival at the Settlement receive 1 Rupee per day, which at the discretion of the Superintendent may be raised to a maximum of Rupees 50 per mensem. An ordinary division of convicts is subsisted as under, which is the monthly cost to Government of a complete division for food:—

					Rs.	A.	P.
1	Division gangsmen	at Rs.	8 0 0	per mensem	...	8	0 0
1	Sub-division do.	at „	6 0 0	„	..	6	0 0
1	Mohurrir	at „	6 0 0	„	...	6	0 0
16	Section gangsmen	at „	5 0 0	„	...	80	0 0
80	1st. class convicts	at „	0 3 0	per diem	...	450	0 0
120	2d do.	at „	0 2 6	„	...	562	8 0
200	3d do.	at „	0 2 0	„	...	750	0 0
Total					...	1,862	8 0
Or, per annum					...	22,350	0 0

There are other classes of convicts, who may, if deserving, receive some allowance in addition to their subsistence, such as Eurasians and others, who from superior education, are qualified as Overseers, Clerks, Assistants in the Public Works Department, Conservancy, Unarmed Police, &c. &c.

Subsistence allowance is issued monthly in advance, so soon as the overseers in charge of divisions, submit their muster rolls and abstracts to the Superintendent, who checks them and orders their payment in Andaman tokens from the Treasury. The overseer publicly pays his division, and takes every man's acquittance for the amount received. Deductions are made from a laboring convict's subsistence on account of hospital stoppages during the time he is in hospital; this deduction is calculated at 1 anna and 9 pie per diem. At present, barrack lights are paid for by convicts; they also pay dhobies for washing their clothes. Each overseer is required to keep the following books:—Muster Roll; Abstract Book; Acquittance Roll Book of Pay, Clothing, &c.; Register of Births, Marriages, and Deaths; Settlement Order Book or File.

The above books are inspected either by the Superintendent or his Deputy, quarterly. Order books are maintained in the Superintendent's office, in which all arrivals, appointments, promotions, transfers, &c., are recorded, and from

these several checks, the correctness of the overseer's bills is tested. On the death of a convict, the proceeds of what he may die possessed of, are credited to Government. During the past year there were 27 European and Eurasian prisoners present. These are accommodated in a stone building with a shingled roof on Ross. Each prisoner is allowed a cot, but he supplies himself with all other necessaries. Each is allowed the same proportion of room as is allotted to a European soldier. The native convicts are quartered in iron framed wooden barracks, containing from 100 to 150 men each, which are divided into 4 or 6 partitions, each accommodating 25 men, the compartments are divided by wooden lattice work. At the extremity of each barrack, sleeps apart, some one or other of the petty officers of the division, who has a general view of the whole; each compartment has a separate door, at which a "parrawalla" or sentry is supposed to stay; he is answerable for the property of his section, when his comrades are absent at work. The minimum space allotted to each convict when available is 648 cubic feet, and 36 feet of area, but this allowance is not always maintained. Within the space, the convicts sleep and keep their wooden boxes, made out of ghee cases, and when they go out their bedding is folded and placed on the top of their boxes. The barracks are swept the first thing in the morning, and washed with water once a week. Nominal rolls of convicts are called twice daily in barracks. The convicts rise at gun fire, proceed to labor at 6 A. M., have an interval for rest and meals, and having worked 8 hours break off at 6 P. M. They are compelled to be in their barracks by 8 P. M. Lanterns are kept burning in each section during the night, and it is the duty of the various gangsmen, at uncertain hours of the night, to see that all are in barracks.

54. *How convicts obtain their subsistence money and food.*—As regards supplies of food, the convicts are all paid in "Andaman tokens" in advance. About the 1st of the month, they purchase their daily supplies from the convict bunneahs, who procure all they require from the Commissariat on indent. These indents are countersigned by the Superintendent, and on the back is the signature of the head Treasury clerk, in evidence that the bunneah has deposited the amount of value of the articles noted in the indent, in the Treasury.

55. *Absence of Rules.*—The Superintendent is now preparing a set of rules for the guidance of the Settlement: strange to say, hitherto none have been compiled. It is feared this absence of definite and inexorable rules, leads to much corruption among the convicts, and as a result the even majesty of the law is outraged, inasmuch as the poor, perhaps for a less offence suffer, what the rich, who have committed a greater, can avoid; both have become justly subject to the penalties of breach of the same law, but both do not suffer equally. Justice requires that some stringent law should immediately be made, and adhered to. Prisoners who have money are allowed to become self-supporters almost as soon as they arrive. As regards promotion of prisoners to gangsmen, and on many other subjects, clearly defined laws are required. At present the Superintendent is guided by general instructions which from time to time have been sanctioned by Government; but there are virtually no rules current, which can bear the name of such, that is, they have never been formally published, nor translated for the guidance of those most concerned. The greatest difficulty I had to contend with was, the absence of definite rules; nothing could be brought to a decisive test, and I scarcely knew where to commence, the result is, that this report is not so concise as it otherwise would have been. All information had to be picked up from observation and each subject probed, as information was gained. Government however, will, I trust, perceive from the mass of correspondence which passed between myself, the Superintendent, and other functionaries attached to the Settlement, that there was no want of desire on my part to grapple with, and comprehend

the various important points connected with the welfare of a Settlement, the circumstances of which, I was in a great measure ignorant of, until I arrived at Port Blair. That mass of correspondence, including minutes and returns, extended over 2,000 pages of manuscript foolscap.

56. *Appearance of Convicts.*—I was much struck with the appearance of the convicts as a body. After visiting between 3 and 400 sick, and then seeing those who were out of hospital, one could not but observe there were very many at their various employments, who, from their appearance, approached far too nearly the condition of those under treatment.

57. *Sanitary Committee assembled.*—On receipt, therefore, of the sanitary report of the Settlement for the past year, I assembled a Committee (under the authority the Chief Commissioner had invested me with) to consult and report on the sanitary state of the prisoners, and on some other points, more or less connected with the future health of the prisoners.

58. *Assistant Surgeon Gamack's report and Mortuary Returns.*—The Medical Report for 1866 drawn up by Assistant Surgeon Gamack, is very meagre. It will be found in the Appendix, together with the opinion of the Sanitary Committee on the causes of the increased mortality. The following two forms taken from it are inserted here to give a general idea of the mortality and classes of disease prevalent among the prisoners during the past year.



FORM A.

Statement shewing the total number of Convicts resident in the Penal Settlement of Port Blair, and the number of Casualties in and out of Hospital during the year 1866, as well as the number remaining on the 1st day of January 1867.

	NAMES.		EUROPEANS AND EURASIANS.		TOTAL.
Number of Convicts remaining on the 1st January, 1866	38	5,304
" " received from 1st January, 1866	5	2,256
Total	43	7,560
Number of Convicts escaped during the year 1866...	233
" " died in hospital during the year 1866	657
" " died of disease out of hospital during 1866	9
" " murdered during the year 1866
" " committed suicide during the year 1866	3
" " drowned during the year 1866	3
" " shot during the year 1866
" " died by falling in of barrack during 1866	3
" " transferred to other jails during the year 1866	1	90
" " hanged during the year 1866
" " licensed during the year 1866
" " released during the year 1866	7	47
Deduct Casualties—Total	8	1,046
Total	35	6,516
Add recaptured escaped convicts*	164
Number of convicts remaining on the 1st January 1867	35	6,678

* Of escaped convicts returned to the Settlement or recaptured—
Males 163
Females 1

(Signed) A. GAMACK, A. M., M. D.,
Assistant Surgeon,
Offg. Senior Medical Officer.

True Copy.
(Signed) B. FORD, Lieut.-Colonel,
Superintendent, Port Blair.

FORM B.

Statement showing the Ages and Sex of Convicts who have died in Hospital during the year 1866.

Sex.	Under 25 years.	23 to 35.	35 to 40.	40 to 45.	Above 45 years.	Total.
Males	11	270	101	71	194	647
Females ... ..	...	4	...	2	4	10
Total	11	274	101	73	198	657
Percentage on Total Deaths ... }	1.67	41.70	15.37	11.11	30.13	100

PORT BLAIR, }
1st January, 1867. }

(Signed)

A. GAMACK, A. M., M. D.,

Assist. Surgeon, Offg. Senior Medical Officer.

59. *Death-rate in 1866 over $10\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and report of Committee.*—Although no epidemic occurred during the year, the death-rate during 1866, was over $10\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of strength, against $6\frac{1}{2}$ for the previous year. The Committee, which was composed entirely of Medical Officers, enquired very carefully into the state of the prisoners' health, and their report will be found to contain very valuable information on the subject. The chief reasons for the increase of mortality during the past year over the previous one, are attributed by the Committee to several causes; they are as follows:—

1st.—Importation of old, worn-out men.

2nd.—Scarcity of animal and vegetable diet.

3rd.—Present system of dieting.

4th.—Clearing Jungle for cultivation.

5th.—Inability to retain newly arrived prisoners sufficiently long at "Ross Island."

60. *Preventable causes.*—In this place I shall only draw attention to those causes which are capable of being prevented, or largely modified.

61. *Old worn-out men drafted from Indian Jails to die.*—They are first, the number of old and worn-out prisoners, drafted from the Jails of India, the effect of which process is, not only that the death-rate at "Port Blair" is inordinately enhanced, while that of the Indian Jails, from whence they are sent is reduced, but men incapable from age, and even blindness, are sent to a new foreign country for penal servitude, where it is difficult to find work for any but robust men, and where a convict costs Government, including transit, &c., from four to five times what he does on the Continent of India. It is submitted, that none but healthy and vigorous prisoners should be sent to "Port Blair," and none over 40 years of age. Out of 675 deaths which occurred in 1866, 473 were convicts who had been less than one year on the Settlement, and 40 per cent were men of 40 years old and upwards.

62. *Prisoners from Bombay and Madras generally unhealthy.*—Again it is noted by the Committee, that the prisoners landed from "Bombay" and "Madras" are, as a rule, in a more unhealthy state than those from Bengal or Burmah. There is no reason why the voyage from Madras to Port Blair should tell more on the physique of prisoners from that presidency, than that of those from Bengal, under proper board-ship arrangements. The duration of the voy-

age from Bombay is not so long either as to induce such diseases as scurvy if the board-ship arrangements are good. The inference appears to be, that the prisoners in the jails of Bombay and Madras are not so well fed and cared for as those of Bengal and Burmah, and thus are more liable to the effects of the voyage, and I have heard it stated that such is really the case. As regards the Madrassces (of a reasonable age,) after a short residence at the Andamans, they improve in condition, and do excellent work when properly cared for.

63. *572 deaths from want of nutritious food.*—From the report of the Committee it will be observed that out of 675 fatal cases, 572 are attributed to diseases, which follow defective nutrition, that is, from a totally insufficient supply of vegetable and animal food.

64. *Deficient supply of animal food.*—Regarding the keeping up a supply of animal food, no doubt there are great difficulties to contend against; animals have to be imported, and some classes of prisoners will only eat mutton, a species of food which is very expensive, from the sea voyage telling more on sheep than on other animals. When animals are landed, there is no good grazing ground, and fodder for their maintenance has to be imported month by month, but nevertheless, that all is not done to mitigate the evils arising from having to import live stock will be painfully apparent when I come to treat of the general Commissariat arrangements. Here I will only observe, after deducting what would be paid to Government by prisoners purchasing meat at the prescribed rate, the Commissariat Office estimates the extra cost to Government for supplying beef and mutton to prisoners, in such quantity as to enable each man to have $\frac{3}{4}$ lb per week, would for the present number of convicts, amount annually to Rs. 2,38,621 over and above, be it remembered, what would be paid by the consumers for the meat. Some scale of diet, embracing articles of food, that would yield the sustaining properties of meat (such as ghee and oil) might be framed, which would lessen the great demand for meat diet. This point will be further considered, when I come to write on the "Diet" of the prisoners.

65. *Absence of vegetables arises from negligence.*—As regards the scarcity of vegetables, I am at a loss how to offer explanation of the great negligence which has been permitted in so grave and important a matter. A reference to the correspondence in the Appendix will show that the lamentable deficiency in vegetable diet, has never been brought to the notice of the Superintendent by the responsible Medical Officers, notwithstanding that the hospitals were last year crowded with cases evincing want of nitrogenous food; and scorbutic taint and other diseases allied thereto were so common, that no less than 572 deaths out of a total mortality of 675 are attributed, by the Committee, chiefly to an insufficient supply of fresh vegetables, and want of animal food; yet, beyond casual notices of this state of things existing, appearing in the monthly reports, the Medical officers thought the fact unworthy of being pressed home to the understanding of the Superintendent, consequently the cultivation of that description of produce (which, had the dire necessity for it been impressed on him, could, with a little care, have been raised from the soil in any required quantities) was neglected, and thus a great misfortune, the result of reprehensible mismanagement ensued, occasioning an unnecessary increase of mortality. The demand for vegetables at times was so great, that the convicts purchased vegetables imported by the Commissariat Officer from foreign ports. The vegetable question appeared to interest no one, the cultivation was not pushed on, and the consequence was an increase in the death-rate of 4 per cent; diseases preventable or at least capable of alleviation by the use of nutritious, anti-scorbutic diet, increased, and carried off their emaciated victims. Nor was this all; many who escaped death from the above diseases met it in perhaps a more terrible form; a

scratch, causing abrasion of the skin, usually proved the death warrant of the sufferer. A painful ulcer followed the accident, and the result was generally gangrene, and a painful death. It is a matter of regret to have to record that, to a great extent, much of this is still going on. Undoubtedly some of the mortality in the Settlement, can be attributed to men employed in clearing the forest for cultivation. This however is true only to a limited extent, and certainly jungle clearing is one of those measures in which the end justifies the means; the laborers at the time may suffer, but a general public good is the result: we find free labor employed in similar undertakings. British Burmah would not be what it is, were it otherwise; but it is probable some of the evils brought to notice under this held at Port Blair, might have been alleviated, and possibly some of the fatal cases prevented, had the medical supervision been efficient.

66. *Cultivation in a state of stagnation.*—Regarding the progress of cultivation at the “Andaman Settlement” it may be said, in view of the non-production of a sufficient supply of vegetables for the convicts, that it is in a state of stagnation. It is now quite nine years since Doctor Walker commenced clearing operations on these islands. In his time, Ross, Chatham, and Viper were cleared, and Aberdeen and Haddo commenced; and when Sir Robert Napier inspected the Settlement in 1864, some further extension of clearances had been made at Aberdeen and Haddo, and new stations had been commenced at Perseverance Point, and other localities. In the report on the affairs of “Port Blair” for 1864-65, it is stated that the clearances then effected covered 243 acres.

67. *Return of land cultivated at each station.*—The following return shows the name of, and date on which each station was commenced, the daily average number of prisoners employed, and approximately the quantity of land cleared, and the area under cultivation:—

Station.	Date when commenced.	Daily average number of prisoners employed.	Quantity of land cleared.	Area under cultivation.
			Acres.	Acres.
Ross Island	10th March 1858 ...	3,126	82	5½
Aberdeen	16th April 1858 ...	595	99	39
Chatham	10th March 1858 ...	555	11½	0¾
Phoenix Bay and adjoining lands } near Aberdeen	Not given ...	321	11	5
Viper	8th October 1858 ...	774	83½	5½
South Point	August 1865 ...	272	7	Nil.
Haddo	19th June 1862 ...	388	101	79
Mount Harriet	28th October 1863 ...	.....	23	13
Command Point	10th November 1865..	.....	6½	Nil.
Hope Town	Not given ...	.....	11¾	5
Navy Bay Point	10th November 1865..	.....	45	10
Perseverance Point	10th November 1865..	.....	15½	Nil.
Port Mount, including Mount } Augusta	1st May 1866 ...	.....	75	17
Total ... ..	.....	.....	572½	179¾

68. *Total quantity of land under cultivation.*—The return of land cleared and cultivated is given approximately by the Executive Engineer, who gives 572½ acres cleared, and 179½ acres cultivated. The Superintendent, however, in his letter No. 32, dated 26th April, sets down the quantity of land he has brought under cultivation at 400 acres; the true medium probably lies between the two extremes. Supposing the larger quantity was under cultivation, it is not intelligible why there should have been such a scanty supply of vegetables. Now the jail garden in Rangoon is of inferior soil to many parts of the cultivable land in the Andaman Settlement; in this garden, which is only about two acres in extent, last year was produced 65,871lbs of vegetables; this quantity sufficed to feed 706 convicts for half the year, and it must be remembered that convicts in Rangoon receive each their regulated supply, which is ozs. 57·24 per man per week: what the Rangoon jail garden could not supply, of course, had to be purchased.

69. *Variety of vegetables at the Exhibition on Ross Island.*—The following Return of vegetables produced on the Settlement, and exhibited at the Agricultural Show, held in Ross Island in March last, shows the great variety of vegetables the soil is capable of producing, viz :—

English vegetables.	Turnips.	Herbs
Indian ditto	Beetroot.	Melons
Vegetables grown by Burmans.	Yams.	Pine apples.
Cabbages.	Sweet Potatoes.	Indian corn.
Knol-kohl.	Karen ditto	Garden flowers.
Salad.	Sugarcane.	Wild ditto
Carrots.		

70. *Cultivation of Guinea grass, a food for Cattle.*—As regards “Guinea grass,” which is invaluable as fodder, the small quantity which has been planted thrives like a weed. It was first planted, I believe, in 1865; by this time 100 acres might have been sown under proper arrangements, but I fear I am within the mark, when I state that all the scattered spots planted with this grass do not aggregate four or five acres. The list of trees flourishing on “Ross Island,” already noted, shows triumphantly the adaptability of the soil and climate of the “Andamans” for the growth of the most useful tropical fruits, but if we except “Ross island,” and a few “Beetle palms,” “Jack” and “Bale” fruit trees on Aberdeen, planted by former Superintendents, and which are now bearing an abundance of fruit, there is little progress in this kind of cultivation throughout the whole Settlement. This season a few useful trees are about being planted, but there is no reason shown why timely arrangements were not made to propagate at least one lakh of cocoanut trees this year. I endeavoured to obtain the services of the Steamer “Kwantung” to tow down one of the Settlement schooners (of about 90 tons burthen) to the Nicobar Islands, to procure a supply before the monsoon set in, but the Commander of the steamer pleaded some excuse against going that short distance, (although he afterwards towed an 850 ton-ship to Moulmein). Thus unfortunately another entire season has been lost.

71. *Direction in which to extend Settlement.*—Regarding the direction in which the existing settlements should be extended, the Committee carefully reviewed the question; they considered that it is inadvisable to occupy even the entire barrack accommodation already provided at “Mount Harriet,” which is calculated to hold a full division of 400 prisoners, and recommend that only half a division be maintained there. I entirely concur in this proposal, and in the reasons assigned by the Committee. “Command Point,” “Hope Town,” “Perseverance Point,” all on the northern shore, the Committee think should not be extended. The first and vital requirement is to obtain some produce out of the soil, at suitable localities, nearest head quarters. This urgent want can be fully supplied by cultivating the tract of land included between the

stations of "South Point," "Aberdeen," "Haddo," and "Navy Bay." The report of the Committee is so complete on this point, and their recommendations after personal examination so strong, that it is amazing how the pre-eminent advantages existing so near head quarters came to be overlooked, and a distant point, like "Port Mouat," selected. The Committee observes as follows:—"This ground is rich in alluvial soil for a considerable portion of the way along the road from Aberdeen to Navy Bay; it is low, the hills are small and undulating. It possesses elevated ridges for the accommodation of 20,000 convicts, if necessary; if opened up it would give a large and at the same time compact tract of country open to a free circulation of air, but protected from the violence of the monsoon, from the north-east by Mount Haughton and the spurs from it, the vegetation on which should not be touched, and to the south-west by the highlands south of "Navy Bay" station. It is near the head quarter station of "Ross island," and the consequent supervision which is so very necessary. The carriage of supplies from the stores on "Ross Island," for the various divisions that might be formed, would be comparatively easy, which, when the labor, trouble, and loss, caused by conveyance to a distance is taken into consideration, is an advantage which cannot be over-rated. Should a large body of convicts be stationed there, they could be easily guarded and held in check by a strong guard of Police, centrally placed, and if after clearing, good roads be made in every direction, patrols from the central force would be able in a great measure to prevent escapes. Food supplies being kept on "Ross Island," and this promontory of land being flanked, at each angle by Ross, Chatham, and Viper Islands, convicts could not hope to make a successful rising."

72. *Good land for Paddy cultivation. Brigade Creek, proposal to cultivate it.*—The recommendations of the Committee as regards the direction, from which cultivation should be extended are both sound and reasonable, as far as they go; but there is one point which from want of sufficient time, they were unable to attend to, and that was the selection of a tract of country suitable for paddy cultivation. This great desideratum was supplied by the explorations of Dr. Kelly and myself, and as the subject of the supply of indigenous rice is one of the highest importance, I will enter into the subject somewhat at large. The present cost of rice imported, for say 7,000 prisoners, is about one lakh of rupees per annum, but when the freight comes to be added, and also the cost of gunny bags, wastage, cost of shipping, and the expenses of establishment at the ports of exportation, and other incidental charges, the actual cost probably reaches nearly 1½ lakhs. Now at a spot marked "Brigade Creek" on the north shore of Port Blair, near to "Chatham Island," there is an inlet of salt water, which at a short distance inland is divided by a hill, one body of salt water passing to the eastward, and the other to the westward. This flow of salt water extends far back into the interior, both to the east and west side of the said hill, and covers an immense expanse of low ground, which is now overgrown with mangrove; the entrance through which the water flows from "Mangrove Bay," has been so narrowed through the soil silting up, and the accumulation of debris brought down from the adjacent water sheds, that the actual passage through which the tide flows and ebbs, is not more than 125 to 150 feet across, and its depth also is inconsiderable, being about 4 fathoms in the centre, and shallowing towards either bank. I have said that the channel itself is narrow; but besides this channel, there is a bed of silt, which extends from the western shore to the edge of the channel which is above low water mark, and this bank is consequently covered with mangrove. At high water the tide flows over the entire length of this mud bank, which is probably 800 yards in length. What is required then to reclaim some of the finest rice land the world can produce, is, that this slip of mangrove swamp be bunded through its whole length of about 800 yards by a bank which need not be above 30 feet wide at its base, and 20 at the top, sufficiently high to be above the highest tides, say 6 feet; the present passage of the water must also be bunded, probably it

would require to be staked across in two rows with an interval say of 40 feet. These piles would serve to hold ballast in its place as a foundation of the bund; stone ballast could be collected without much difficulty, and the mud and silt which comes down every ebb tide would rapidly consolidate the mass. Just above the level of low tide, there should be sluice gates which would exclude all water coming from the sea, and when the tide fell, any accumulation of water above low water mark, within the break water, would be able to escape; but this would only happen in the monsoon months, when for the first year or two, probably the accumulation of fresh water (added to the quantity of salt water now present) would cause an overflow, but in the course of a few years, what with the accumulation of silt and debris, and also from evaporation, it is probable the volume of water within the bund would decrease, and from the accession of fresh to the exclusion of salt water, it would in time become a fresh water lake. It is probable 500 men working daily could finish the bund in one season, while another body of 500 could drive in the piles and fill in the ballast. Tramways and trucks would be useful, and stone could be blasted on the spot; however, even if it took two years, or what would be better, double the number of men for one season, the result would be grand, the reclamation of between 15,000 and 20,000 acres would be the least result. This place is now densely covered with mangrove; when the salt water is reduced to a height of low water level, the whole of the mangrove previously within the influence of high water mark, would be killed in a couple of months, and within two years the whole mass having become rotten would then act as manure, and tend to raise the level of the land on which it now grows. The decomposition of mangrove when once it ceases to be nourished by salt water, is marvellously rapid and complete; a large mangrove tree which I saw, with a body a foot thick, and which had been felled about a year, was so rotten that a child might pound it to dust. Possibly the making of the bund might prove unhealthy to some classes of prisoners; I therefore recommend that the making of the bund be performed solely by Burmese, and that 500 prisoners of between 7 to 14 years' sentence be selected from the jails of British Burmah, while 500 more prisoners of other races make the break water (if necessary a greater number of a useful class of prisoners could be imported from India); as the latter body would be provided with boats, they might be quartered on "Chatham Island which is close by, while the Burmese might be lodged close to the creek, on the west bank, on the brow of an adjacent hill; this class of men are, what our guide, a Burman, described his race to be "children of the swamp" and "in my country (Arracan) he said, tens of thousands of acres have been redeemed from mangrove swamp, and are now fertile paddy fields." So certain was our guide of success, that he begged to be allowed to have some buffaloes, and a party of his people. He proposed squatting down on the edge of the mangrove swamp, by a fresh water creek, commencing operations, by cutting down the mangrove, and bunding in a portion, without waiting for the grand bund I have above advocated. Dr. Kelly accompanied me in a boat for about 7 miles up the eastern creek, and we also pulled some distance up the western creek; we could see no end to the low ground, which as the tide fell, became exposed about two feet above the level of low water, presenting the richest soil that ever was bestowed upon man. The Burmese who accompanied us said, the flat land on the eastern side extended for ten miles, and on the western for 12 miles, and then came a large space covered with bamboo trees which would make good grazing ground, and here also could be planted the *Boehmeria cordata* or *Urtica nivea*, known in commerce as Chinese grass, from the fibre of which a valuable cloth is woven equal to the best mohair,—*vide* letter No. 4156, dated 22nd April 1867 from the Home Department. The swamp once cleared, rice, sugarcane, tobacco, and other valuable products could be raised in such quantities, and with such little trouble, that the Settlement would not only be fully supplied, but there would be a surplus for exportation. Rum could be manufactured on Chatham, enough to supply all the troops in India, and ships could receive it as a cargo alongside the wharf

there. Here could be formed Burmese colonies, which would place the prisoners of that class, almost in their natural element; there would be no fear of escapes. Even life prisoners (if their wives were allowed to them after reasonable probation) would prove the best of laborers, and disposing of the Burmese in this way would be far preferable, and more humane than sending them, as has been proposed to Bombay, which step would simply be equivalent to a sentence of death; their absence however from Port Blair would reduce the Police responsibilities to a minimum, but that does not appear a sufficient reason why the colony should suffer. I would have separate settlements for Bengal and Madras self-supporters. "Port Mouat" would do well for the Bengalees, as although this is an exposed place, this race are least prone to escape by sea; the part of the valley near "Aberdeen" might be set apart for the Madrassesees, but the "Brigade Creek" settlement I would reserve for Burmese, as it is most protected, and it is as they admit, almost their native soil; I would earnestly recommend that the bund be commenced at the conclusion of the rains, in such strength as to ensure its completion before the ensuing rains of 1868. The place should then be abandoned for at least 18 months, after which carry out the Burmese wish "give us the swamps, and let the kalas (foreigners) keep the hills," and with proper management we ought to hear no more of the expensiveness of Port Blair. I heard of a proposal to dam up the water of the bay above Viper Island; I examined the locality but found comparatively little land above low water mark at the head of the bay, whereas the low ground within Brigade Creek is already so much raised as to be covered with mangrove trees.

73. *Diet.*—Concerning the dieting of prisoners at Port Blair, the Committee take grave exception to the present system which permits prisoners to supply themselves from the "Bunneahs" shops, ignorant of those articles of diet which contain most nourishment. The first thing required appears to be the preparation of a scale of diet, which will be suitable not only to each particular class, but to the caste of the natives from the various regions of India. It is essential first that the diet roll contains a specification of articles of the most nutritive qualities, excluding as far as possible beef and mutton, (especially the latter as being the most expensive), and second that the cost of the diets prescribed must be within the reach of the lowest paid convicts, namely those receiving 2 annas per diem. The next point is to ascertain the best method by which the consumption of the stipulated ingredients by the convicts can be insured. On the first head, framing a diet roll, there is no difficulty whatever.

74. *What ingredients obtainable and what difficult to procure.*—As regards the procuring the necessary ingredients at a reasonable cost, the difficulties are not so great as would at first sight appear. Pork, ghee, sesamum oil, atta, rice, dholl, goor, onions, curry stuff can be supplied in any quantities, at a reasonable rate. Difficulties at present exist in procuring a supply of vegetables, beef, mutton and fish. Under proper management the first and last of these can be readily overcome, the supply of beef can be grappled with, but under more careful arrangements than have hitherto existed. There remains the difficulty of supplying sheep; this might be partially overcome by providing goats, which are hardier; but fish would appear to be our best resource as a substitute for mutton, and it should be borne in mind, that it is only among the higher classes of Hindoos that the difficulty occurs of having to substitute mutton for some other description of tissue yielding diet; here, besides ghee, fish steps in; for instance, the Indian prisoners within the Rangoon jail never get meat of any description, nor even ghee, but they are well supplied with sesamum oil, fresh vegetables, and fish.

75. *1,500 Convicts on Settlement who will eat anything.*—It is well however to recollect, that out of 7,466 laboring convicts at Port Blair, there are some

1,500 who will eat anything; oil, fish, and swine's flesh will suffice for such, and these articles can be easily supplied.

76. *Messing system recommended.*—Experience points to the messing system as the most efficacious means of insuring the consumption of the regulated diet. I am disposed to consider the difficulties which have been recorded against the messing scheme as exaggerated. From the Appendix it will be seen that Mr. Homfray (Assistant to the Superintendent of Port Blair, in charge of Port Mouat) instituted a mess gang in the 9th or Marine division, and from his account, (though he had some trouble), he succeeded in bringing that portion of the division which was messed, and which undoubtedly was very hard worked, into a healthy, industrious and contented state. On the removal of Mr. Homfray, the Officer who succeeded him, was either incapable or unwilling to take the necessary pains to ensure the messed gang against the pilfering of the cooks, and the consequence was, it was broken up, within 20 days of Mr. Homfray leaving. This most fatal error was sanctioned by the Superintendent, and thus the nucleus of an excellent institution, which in competent hands had achieved reasonable success, was abandoned. But Mr. Homfray carried out his idea in another part of the settlement, to which he had been removed, and it is on record that the healthiest sub-division of convicts in the whole Settlement, are those who are messed at the "Port Mouat" stations, under Mr. Homfray's system. Seeing these results in a place which had proved itself the grave-yard of numbers, the subject of messing is worthy of the attention which the Committee have bestowed on it. Notwithstanding the exception taken by the Superintendent to the carrying out of the scheme is not so formidable as is represented. In the first place the scale of diet, or the allowance for diet, should be pitched so as to ensure there being a trifle over, at the end of the month, which the prisoners should receive in cash. This would act as a salve to the more obnoxious part of the plan, then from the main body of the convicts must be struck off the 1,500 men who have no prejudices as regards diet. The Mussulmen as a body, can show no cause against messing, so long as they have a butcher of their own creed. There would only then remain a minority of Hindoos as dissentients. Such of these, as would not conform, might be allowed their own separate cooking places and rations; this residue might be formed into caste gangs. From these last gangs, no promotions should be allowed to "Tolidars" or "Gangsmen:" no self-supporters should be permitted, and marriages prohibited: this need not be considered in the light of a punishment, but inasmuch as the members of this particular gang would be non-conformists to rules which it is desirable to carry out for the benefit of the Settlement at large, and for themselves in particular, they would not be entitled to the privileges accorded to those who accept the messing system with a good grace; the result would be, I am confident, that the body of dissentients would be reduced to the least possible numerical dimensions. All new comers should be messed without exception. The increase of pigs and goats should be pushed on as much as possible, but all should be placed under the superintendence of the Commissariat.

77. *Better arrangements to be made for supply of fish.*—Better arrangements should be made regarding the supply of fresh fish from the waters of the Settlement, and also dried fish and fish paste from British Burmah. The Sapper company on Ross Island should be allowed to cater for themselves, this would reduce the demand for mutton, and the self-supporters, (of whom more will be said hereafter) should be permitted to catch all the fish they can.

78. *Anticipated results.*—In concluding this subject, I would remark that it is patent that allowing convicts subsistence money, is a grievous error; it induces and assists habits of hoarding money, a prevailing custom among most classes of natives of India, and this accumulation of money is in a measure

obtained by the prisoners depriving themselves of sufficient nourishment ; the messing system on the other hand, mildly commenced, properly managed, and rigidly hereafter enforced, should produce such palpable beneficial results, that it would in a short time, reduce disease and death to a minimum ; and the convicts with renewed vigor, sustained by adequate and wholesome food, would amply repay any trouble that may arise in carrying out the plan, as is done in the Moulmein Jail with Indian convicts.

79. *The retention of Port Mouat particularly treated on.*—The subject of retaining Port Mouat as a settlement has been so fully discussed, and the correspondence attached to the Appendix to this report, is so exhaustive, that the notices here on this point will be as brief as possible. From what has preceded, it will be seen that the settlement of "Port Mouat," consists of several scattered stations, one at "Woodlands," and adjoining it, "Garden Hill," on the east side of the isthmus "Tytler's Ghat at the port itself, and "Mount Augusta" beyond the bay, west, and towards the sea. The subject of the retention or reduction of these distant settlements, occupied the serious attention of myself, and the members of the Committee ; I walked over every part of the several settlements, with the Assistant Superintendent, and it was visited by Surgeons Rean and Cowie, and Assistant Surgeon Kelly (the last Officer went over it twice, once with myself, and again with Surgeon Rean), I made an abstract of the voluminous correspondence which had taken place between Government, the Chief Commissioner and the Superintendent, and placed it before the Committee with my letter No. 394, dated 26th April 1867.

80. *Recommendation of Committee.*—The recommendation of the Committee, was to the effect, that one Section of 25 prisoners only should be retained at "Mount Augusta," while 50 prisoners should occupy "Tytler's Ghat," where there is an angle-iron barrack already erected, and other temporary buildings ; and 25 more men were allotted to keep up communication ; thus withdrawing all the prisoners from "Woodlands" and "Garden Hill" at any rate during the ensuing rains. This reduction was proposed, because it is feared the exhalations from the fallen and decaying timber would induce sickness, as it had done in the previous year.

81. *Prisoners in excess of recommendation of Committee to be withdrawn at once.*—As the monsoon had already set in previous to my departure, in anticipation of the sanction of the Chief Commissioner, I issued instructions for the Superintendent to withdraw the prisoners in excess of the number prescribed by the Committee.

82. *Port Mouat prematurely developed ; total abandonment not advisable ; recommended to be made a self-supporting Settlement.*—With reference to the suitability of the valley between "Aberdeen" and "Navy Bay" for cultivation, it will be seen how premature it was to carry away from the head quarter station to such a distance as Port Mouat, a whole division of 400 convicts, when land was available within easy reach, the clearance and cultivation of which would, in all human probability, not have cost such heavy loss of life as the "Port Mouat" scheme has done ; while benefit of paramount importance would have been gained by effectually clearing the land in the immediate vicinity of "Aberdeen" and "South Point," and opening a passage for a free current of air immediately upon Ross Island itself. Though I strongly urge that the extension of cultivation should be pushed on as recommended by the Committee between "Aberdeen" and "Navy Bay," and though I do not advocate the entire abandonment of "Port Mouat," yet I consider it very advisable that cultivation in that distant locality should not be pushed on, until land nearer head quarters has been taken up, but I would suggest that the "Port Mouat" settlement be exclusively reserved for self-supporting convicts ; the ground that has already been cleared is sufficient to give say 100 to 150 men

a fair start; all the temporary barracks might be made over for their use, the angle-iron barrack, which is at "Tytler's Ghat" would suffice, when divided into two, for the few police required there, and also furnish sufficient accommodation for the sick. Nothing more would be required from Government; the supplies already there are stated to be sufficient until after the rains, say up to November next; and self-supporters are allowed 10 months' supplies at starting; before that time arrives, arrangements might be completed for settling the place permanently with the prisoners already there as a community of self-supporting cultivators.

83. *Convicts anxious to get married.*—Among these self-supporters at Port Mouat, marriage should, as far as possible be encouraged; there are about 400 marriageable women on "Ross Island." From enquiries I made, every one of these would be married, if only fair facilities were given; in fact the prisoners said even the old and toothless would find husbands; that the comfort of having a separate hut, and even an old hag to cook the meals, while the husband labored in the fields, was so far superior to barrack life that there would not be one woman left, if the men could only get the chance of changing their state. Those prisoners who have toiled and borne the heat and burthen of clearing the soil at the settlement of Port Mouat, should have the first privilege of selecting wives, and there would be no difficulty in the matter, if only the Superintendent gave the necessary facilities and abstained from further interference.

84. *Andaman Homes.*—At Port Mouat there are two homes erected for the use of the Andamanese; one situated about half a mile from "Tytler's Ghat" and the other across the bay at the foot of "Mount Augusta." These sheds consist of one large room about 40 feet long, by 15 feet wide. On the occasion of my visiting them, I found in each home a few of the aborigines, chiefly women and children, the men having gone out to fish. The Andaman race is perhaps at this era the truest type of savage at present extant. No improvement has been made in taming these people. Rice is provided for those who choose to remain at the homes, but the men are generally absent hunting pigs and fishing. There hardly appears to be any substantial reason for keeping up these homes, but at the same time it may be politic to do so. Mr. Homfray's knowledge of their language is extremely limited.

85. *Commissariat.*—In the matter of the Commissariat Department, as conducted at Port Blair, there is much, which calls for grave comment. I beg a reference to letter No. 484, page 1086 of the file of correspondence in which I endeavoured to sketch out some plan by means of anticipatory indents for enabling the controlling officer at Rangoon to check indents, and see that supplies are brought within special budget heads. The present system is simply this;—the authorities at Port Blair indent for what they like at any cost. At the end of the month, an exhibit, in which all items of expenditure are jumbled up, is forwarded to the Commissary General; no distinction is made as to whether the articles are for the use of prisoners, European or Native soldiers, Police, Marine, or for what is called Settlement purposes, which may mean anything. The Commissariat Officer accepts this; he is not responsible in any way for the expenditure, (the larger it is, the more gratifying to his department to be useful to outside dependencies.) He deducts the issues from what is in store and then the transaction appears to end (unless perhaps some issue has been made to an European soldier beyond the authorized scale) as far as his control goes. What I desired to devise was—

1st.—Some plan of curtailing the application for supplies by means of anticipatory indents, which should be passed under review by some controlling authority, *before* purchase.

2nd.—That the issues should be duly checked, but to carry out this check requires a special officer. At present, from the way in which the accounts are rendered, efficient check is impossible. As regards the godowns and buildings attached to the Commissariat, some of the godowns are in a dilapidated state, others are mere sheds with thatched roofs and insecure walls; the space contained in these buildings is so scant, that it is not only difficult, but almost impossible to take proper precautions for securing the goods, the consequence of all this is, that proper internal arrangements cannot, and do not exist; yet strange to say, although this great need of efficient accommodation exists, instead of diminishing the stock of goods by issue, or procuring moderate but timely supplies, an unnecessary supply of stores is frequently procured. The difficulty of storage, and the long period excess stores will have to be kept, occasions a vast amount of wastage and loss to Government; this will be apparent from a perusal of the Commissariat Officer's own statement, which records the number of months supply of various stores he had in hand at the time of my visit.

86. *Stores when received not checked as to quantity.*—The quantity of many of the stores received is not checked, the weight in the invoice is accepted without further testing its accuracy. When a bale of tobacco is issued at Port Blair, it is weighed, and however much the weight may have diminished below the quantity marked on the package when shipped, the deficit is put down to "wastage," and the loss falls on the Government.

87. *Godowns encumbered with articles not absolutely necessary for convicts, and supplies lavish.*—Many articles have heretofore been procured through the Commissariat, which have no business to encumber the Government stores of a Penal Settlement. The supplies have in some instances been lavish; it appears to be no particular person's duty to check the quantities indented for, by the Superintendent on "Calcutta," or other ports; at least the Indents are never sent before hand to the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah.

88. *System of issuing stores at Port Blair, objectionable.*—As regards the stores issued at Port Blair, those issued for private use are supposed to be paid for, as well as those issued to Bunneahs, for resale to convicts or free residents. These indents are all countersigned by the Superintendent, and the clerk of the Treasury signs on the back in token that the amount of value as entered by the Commissariat has been actually paid into the treasury; but on some of the indents I saw the stores had been issued before the Commissariat Officer had even filled in the charge. Indents for stores, which are presumed to be for Settlement purposes, have hitherto been of the roughest kind; they include every variety of stores, but the exact purpose to which they are to be applied is omitted, and the Commissariat Officer has no means whatever of knowing to what particular branch of the Government he is to debit them, or indeed whether they are for *bona fide* Government purposes or not.

89. *New form of indent instituted, and rules issued.*—As a check to this vicious system, I have instituted a form of indent, which will show all necessary particulars. These are in future to be in triplicate; all these will be sent first to the Commissariat Officer, who will fill in the necessary particulars, one will then be returned to the Superintendent, the Commissariat Officer will retain a second, and the third will be forwarded for the information of the Chief Commissioner. The impropriety of the existing system of indents on the Commissariat, will be obvious from an inspection of the form of indent heretofore in use. Selecting some items from a bill for May 1855, such as globe, lamps, ash oars, copper pots, and so on, I required distinct information as to what had been paid for and what not. The return reached me, showing

certain items issued, and certain sold, but when I came to enquire about the payment for the articles sold, it turned out that though issued as "sold," they were merely debited against the Settlement.

90. *Wastage*.—The subject of wastage calls for some special remarks, the more so, because it is observed that the greatest wastage occurs in articles of consumption of the more valuable class: a glance at the returns in the Appendix to this report (*vide* enclosures I and J) will suffice to prove this. Out of 849lbs of tobacco issued in January 1867, 80lbs were written off as wastage; of 12,067lbs of ghee issued in April 1866, 443lbs were debited to wastage; of chenna, out of 1,215lbs, 813lbs were written off, and similarly with many other items. I know nothing of what is a fair per centage to allow for wastage, but I saw several casks of "goor" leaking in the godowns on Ross island, waiting their turn to be served out. I understand that those which showed symptoms of leaking most were issued first, but it struck me, that some means might be instituted to save the leakage without waiting till the Commissariat Officer required to broach the cask. This, however, was not the practice, as the ground of the godowns was in some places completely saturated with saccharine matter. The wastage in wheat and rice appears excessive; grain is imported in new gunny bags only, the Commissariat Officer in Calcutta, objecting to refill bags returned; under such circumstances, the wastage should be small, but as I stated previously, one great test is not applied, no attempt being made to discover the exact quantities received, not even incidentally here and there. The same remark applies to many other valuable supplies. Some specimens of the Wastage Returns will be found in the annexures, from which it will be observed much loss occurs in transit, and from perishable articles being kept too long, or in other words the supplies are unnecessarily large.

91. *Commissariat accommodation*.—Next to the Commissariat stores is a space used as a Public Works Department yard. In this yard, which is perhaps 150 to 200 feet square, are situated in close proximity to the Commissariat godown, thatched sheds for lime, saw pits and tools; in the latter shed is a forge, which is evidently a source of danger. I addressed the Superintendent (see page 1314 of correspondence file) with the view of getting this removed to the waters edge, where there is ample room; and indeed after careful inspection of the place, it was evident that by the removal of a few self-supporting convicts' huts, sufficient room along the sea beach could be found to contain all that was in the Engineer's yard. By this arrangement space will be made available, wherein to erect some new corrugated iron roofed godowns, which had just arrived from England in the ship *Clyde*. The sooner the Engineer's yard is removed to Chatham, the better. All the Commissariat stores should be concentrated on "Ross" Island, under the protection of the main military force, whereas now, some are on Chatham, and some on the *Erin-go-bragh* hulk.

92. *How supplies should generally be obtained*.—With regard to the source from which supplies should be obtained, it may occasionally happen that supplies could be purchased from private individuals at cheaper rates than the ordinary Commissariat tariff; but if sufficient notice were given of the supplies wanted, to heads of Commissariat Departments at "Calcutta" and "Rangoon," in time to admit of tenders being publicly issued, it appears to me that in the long run this would be the most advisable course to adopt. Measures should be organized for ascertaining the prices current at Calcutta and Rangoon of the articles required at the time they are likely to be wanted. I placed this matter before the Superintendent and instanced several items, which had been bought at Calcutta, when cheaper in Rangoon. The Commissariat Officer on the other hand instanced cases, in which the reverse had

8 annas for mutton, and 4 annas for beef, for all free residents, and in a like proportion to all convicts drawing over Rs. 30 per mensem. To the first proposition he assented, but considered all persons who had salaries of less than Rs. 100 per mensem, should pay at existing rates; perhaps it would be advisable to abide by the Superintendent's suggestion. Although the extra amount thus obtained would be small, yet it would be a step in a right direction, while the price would still be far below Rangoon rates. A sharp look out would be requisite to prevent the convicts re-selling their meat rations.

105. *For clothing of convicts, Government hitherto guided by Superintendent.*—The clothing of convicts at Port Blair is a subject which has on several occasions been before Government. Hitherto Government have adopted the recommendations of the Superintendent, and hence the existing high rate for clothing, has, in a manner, become fortified by the sanction of superior authority.

106. *Cost of clothing convicts last year.*—Now the total cost of clothing 6,095 convicts for last year, is estimated by the Superintendent at Rs. 42,047, which gives about Rs. 7 per head. In the first place, the total number of prisoners present on the Settlement on 1st January 1866, was 5,034; to these at various times were added 2,139, making a total of 7,173; but from this has to be deducted by deaths, 675, and by other casualties 371, leaving a balance of 6,127. From this balance has to be deducted self-supporters 456, therefore there would be only on a rough estimate 5,671 to be clothed, but not all these would have been an entire year on the Settlement. It will be perhaps fair to assume, making allowances for those who died before they had been 12 months on the Settlement, and those who arrived at broken periods, that there were as estimated by the Superintendent 6,095 prisoners, to receive 3 suits during the year.

107. *Clothing seen at Muster parade on 1st May.*—From some of the muster rolls, in which I included a column to show the number of suits produced by those who attended muster, the following information has been obtained:—

COORTAS.			DOOTIES.		
No. of men having one.	No. of men having two.	No. of men having three.	No. of men having one.	No. of men having two.	No. of men having three.
696	1,287	1,386	690	1,324	1,384

108. *Clothing does not nearly represent cost.*—Some allowance must be made for cloth worn out; but after due allowance, the clothing paraded by the prisoners made a very poor show, as representing the expenditure of Rs. 42,047, and on the whole I consider the Government clothing as worn by the convicts at Port Blair not superior to that worn by the convicts in the Rangoon Jail. In order, however, to satisfy myself as to the correctness of the clothing account, and to have a clear idea of the cause for the high rate charged to Government, I went to the Superintendent's office to inspect the books, and compare the Commissariat Officer's records with his.

109. *No books kept; Rough memo. alone produced, and the Commissariat Officer keeps no account of breadth and length of cloth issued.*—The Superintendent, it appears, keeps no books; all that he could produce were some rough memoranda, in loose sheets, kept by the Head clerk, and the head durzee's

account of cloth received, kept in the vernacular. There was no possibility of checking the durzee's account with the Commissariat Officer's issues, as the latter keeps no account of the length or breadth of the cloth issued. The Superintendent frames indents on the Commissariat for such cloth as he requires from time to time; he also procures supplies direct from such markets as he considers he can be supplied from cheapest. The clothes are made up under his own house, and issued to overseers for distribution. On clothes being delivered to them the convicts attach their mark to the muster roll. In the absence of reliable records it is to the Overseers and the Muster rolls, that recourse must be had, to form an exact account, and as this would require time, the Superintendent was requested to go carefully through the accounts of distribution, and frame as correct an account as he could; he was further requested to open books, and insist on the Commissariat officer making proper arrangements for ascertaining the exact quantity of cloth issued.

110. *Committee recommend three suits per man be continued. Rangoon Jail muster of clothing proposed. Saving which will accrue.*—From the proceedings of the Committee it will be seen that they recommend the continuance of three suits being issued annually, but they consider the Rangoon Jail muster of clothing superior, and if Port Blair was supplied from the Moulmein Jail, they estimated there would be a considerable saving, that is to say, accepting the Superintendent's estimate at Rs. 7 per head per annum; these suits could be supplied from Moulmein at (3 Jackets 2-4 and Trowsers 1-14, Rs. 4-2) which for 7,000 convicts would show a saving of nearly 20,125 Rupees.

111. *Convicts should wear Government clothing.*—The Committee also recommend that all convicts should wear convict clothing with such distinguishing mark as may be necessary. It is obviously advisable that this rule should be strictly carried out, as at present much money is spent by the convicts in purchasing clothes to avoid wearing Government clothing.

112. *Communication.*—Facilities for the transportation of stores to the Settlement is a point on which some comment is necessary. At present communication is kept up with Port Blair, Calcutta, and British Burmah, by Government Steamers, hired transports, and also by two small schooners which ply between the coast of British Burmah and Port Blair. These schooners are about 90 tons burthen each; their carrying powers are wholly inadequate to the services which are required from them, while comparatively their expense is excessive; moreover, the number of trips performed, and the quantity of stores carried are inconsiderable. The *Lady Lawrence* in the year 1866, made nine trips from British Burmah to Port Blair, and three trips were made within the jurisdiction of Port Blair, and one to the "Cocos." During the year she was altogether 223 days in port, ostensibly discharging and receiving cargo. The disbursement on her account for the year 1866 amounted to Rs. 6,263-3-9 (Rs. 5,088 establishment, and Rs. 1,175-3-9 for stores). The schooner *Alexandra* made 11 voyages from Burmah to Port Blair during the year; she was 204 days in port. These vessels take nothing from Port Blair. Altogether they conveyed to Port Blair 40 head of cattle, 930 bags of rice, a few tons of sundries, and 11,000 thatching leaves. The whole of this could have been carried in one vessel of moderate tonnage.

113. *Recommends sale or transfer of Schooners, and purchase of a Barque of about 400 to 450 tons.*—It is recommended that both the schooners be either sold or transferred to some other port, where their services could be made available, and that for the "Port Blair" Settlement a barque be purchased of a carrying power of about 400 to 450 tons, with accommodation for carrying 50 head of cattle (which exceeds by 10 the total number conveyed to Port Blair by both schooners during the past 12 months), and hay, &c. The amounts now

sanctioned for the establishments of these vessels, *viz.*, Rs. 10,176 per annum, would probably cover the cost for establishment for the vessel proposed, and she could be made available to carry supplies, for the freightage of which, vessels have to be hired at Rangoon.

114. *The supply of ballast for vessels difficult.*—The supply of ballast, though apparently a matter of insignificance, is a point, as regards “Ross Island,” of very great moment. When it is considered that “Ross Island” is so diminutive, and exposed during each monsoon to the strong currents flowing in from the Bay of Bengal, it is evident that every care should be adopted to prevent encroachments by the sea. Latterly, however, the demand for ballast has been so pressing, that much of the natural breakwater has been removed, and on the north-east end of the Island a small artificial breakwater has been erected to resist the ocean swell.

115. *Ballasting vessels cost the Government great loss of convict labor.*—Again the ballasting of vessels is the cause of much loss to the State, as, to do this, convicts must be employed, whose labor can ill be spared at present. The ballast has all to be put into lighters, the wear and tear of which, to say nothing of delay, is considerable.

116. *Steamer “Diana” recommended to be sold and a small tug purchased.*—This is a small vessel which was transferred to the Port Blair Settlement on the abolition of the “Irrawaddy Flotilla.” She is in such a worn-out state that she is not worth repairing. The Committee who surveyed her considered that her repairs would cost Rs. 15,000. I strongly recommend that she be sold, and that a strong tug boat of some 25-horse power take her place; the tug requires no accommodation except for her crew, and a boat of this sort would prove really useful to this Settlement.

117. *Situation of Circuit House.*—The Circuit House at Port Blair is built on the brow of a hill, and gets none of the east or north-east breeze. It is backed on the east by the station burial-ground, which lies within a few feet of it; on the north it is shut in by cook-houses, and on the south the police guard house is close to it. The place is completely shut in from a free circulation of air, and it was intended immediately in front of this building to erect a row of houses for the accommodation of clerks. I requested that this should not be done until I could communicate with the Chief Commissioner.

118. *Sites chosen for Clerks’ lines defective.*—The site thus chosen for the Clerks’ lines is objectionable for two reasons; first, the building when erected would be in front within a few feet of the Circuit house; and, secondly, the building for the clerks would be jammed against a wall of earth.

119. *Burial-ground, Ross Island, where situated. Well liable to suffer from proximity to burial-ground. Recommends that it be closed.*—The Christian burying ground on Ross is nearly in the centre of the Island, and surrounded with the habitations of the living. Were an epidemic to break out, the exhalations from the burying-ground might result in disease, which would probably depopulate the Island. The wells also at the foot of the hill where the burial-ground is situated are liable to be impregnated and rendered noxious. I brought the matter to the notice of the Sanitary Committee, and suggested that the present ground be at once shut up; that a map may be made of the whereabouts of each tomb, and that they, being placed flat on the ground, be covered with two or three inches of earth, and then flowers and shrubs be planted, thus removing an eyesore. The Committee recommended that a fresh site should be selected on the main land. Immediate measures should be taken to carry out their suggestions.

120. *Andaman tokens ; number coined.*—The establishment of a system of coinage, which shall have special objects in view, is intelligible ; and so long as those special objects are hedged round with effectual precautions, to insure the proposed objects being realized, something may be said at any rate as to the reasonableness of such a scheme. Now, as far as I understand, the objects of creating a special coinage for the Convict Settlement of Port Blair were to check bribery, and hoarding within the Settlement, and to cut off communication with the entire outer world. To effect this object, it appears from a return furnished by the Superintendent that 40,800 copper tokens of the nominal value of one Rupee were coined and imported into the Settlement, and all convicts were ordered to be paid in these coins, and for the purpose of exchange for sums under the denomination of one rupee or token, the usual Indian pice were to be current, but while the transactions between Government and the convicts were restricted to these tokens, all Government officials and free laborers, were paid in silver.

121. *Amount of Silver imported.*—No returns are given of the silver coin sent into the Settlement for the four years 1858, 1859, 1860, or 1862, but for the five years 1861, 1863, 1864, 1865, 1866, and four months of 1867, the sums imported on Government account amounted to Rs. 5,13,999, or an average of one lakh of specie a year ; this would give a total of 9 lakhs. Not one Rupee in cash is shown to have gone out of the colony, although doubtless a certain amount has been taken away by Chinese carpenters and free laborers, and by a few officials, Military and Police. But this has been in a great measure compensated for by the amounts taken into the Settlement by the above classes, and by Commanders of ships who pay for all their purchases in current coin of the realm ; probably the indirect in-coming nearly balances the indirect out-going.

122. *Large amount of coin now in the Settlement.*—I should think there is at least half the silver imported by Government, or say from 4 to 5 lakhs, now in the Settlement, chiefly in the hands of the prisoners, for there were only 50 Rs. in the Treasury when I visited it. The remittances received by hoondies and notes, into the Settlement, need not now be considered, nor the remittances made by hoondies out of the Settlement by Government servants and free settlers, as neither affect the cash in the Settlement. But the transactions of the convicts in respect to remittances, made out of the island for 5 years and 3 months amount to Rs. 1,11,112, and for the whole term of 9 years, the Settlement has been in existence, may be assumed at a quarter of a lakh per year. Doubtless the greater part of this sum was transmitted as payment for goods imported by self-supporting convict shop-keepers.

123. *Non-success of the token system ; bribery and hoarding flourish.*—Then in what has the token system succeeded ? Bribery and hoarding flourish, so the internal object has failed, and with such heavy transactions without, the external object may be said to have failed also. Had silver coin never been introduced, it might have been said, that whatever transactions had taken place they had only been through the medium of copper ; and so far the Government would have saved the withdrawal from cash balances in India of so much silver, this would have been of some advantage ; as it is, the amount of silver coin now in the Settlement, has swamped all utility expected to be derived from having a distinct coinage, and to remedy the evil would take years.

124. *Captains of vessels could import silver, and how.*—The present system works against the proposed objects ; for instance, Captains of vessels can import silver, exchange it for tokens at a profit, and then get drafts on Calcutta or Rangoon either from the treasury or from native convict dealers residing on Ross Island, some of whom are wealthy men, and have wealthy connections in India. Hoondies are granted without any restrictions, and practically the whole machinery is adrift. During my stay at Port Blair, the Commander of the ship

Merchantman sold goods to the amount of Rs. 5,000 in value ; this sum he paid into the Treasury partly in tokens, but chiefly in silver, and received a draft on Calcutta.

125. *Advantage of the scheme for a separate coinage doubtful.*—I am not at all sure that had the scheme of an independent coinage for the Andamans been carried out completely, and the use of any other coin than Andaman tokens been prohibited and made punishable, any real good would have resulted ; it certainly would not stop bribery. For, so long as the possession of results of labor (or in other words comforts and a higher position) are objects of ambition, and can be made a matter of barter, an Andaman token is as good a medium as a silver rupee for all practical purposes : and as regards hoarding, so long as it is an object for a prisoner to save up 100 coins, to enable him to become a self-supporter, it is immaterial whether he saves it in silver or copper. The only recommendations that the idea appears to me to carry, are—*first*, that a system of local coinage may tend to lessen facilities for escape of prisoners, somewhat beyond what the currency of silver coinage of the realm would effect ; and, *secondly*, that Government would be relieved of withdrawing silver coin, from the cash balances of the “ Calcutta and Rangoon ” treasuries in proportion to the extent “ Andaman tokens ” are coined. As regards the first, many ways might be shown in which any restrictions which might be imposed could be evaded, and as regards the second, it has been shown that the total amount of “ Andaman tokens ” coined during the past 9 years, has been under half a lakh, while, the importation of silver into Port Blair may be estimated at nearly twenty times that amount. The monthly disbursement of Andaman tokens “ is about Rs. 25,000 which is kept circulating by money being repaid almost daily into the treasury by “ Bunniah ” for stores, &c.

126. *Self-supporting system falls short of its object.*—The self-supporting system at present in force is carried on under strict conservative rules. There is clear evidence of its falling short of its object. The only idea which occurs to me as clearly conveying a picture of the existing state of affairs, is a state of things, such as may be imagined would evolve under a bad Native Government. Very few (I allude now to the cultivating class) show symptoms of carrying on a thriving business, yet it is past comprehension, that men who after years of toil, obtain the cherished object of their hearts, and become self-supporters, and who weary themselves to clear the soil, build their houses, and commence collecting a few comforts around them should come to a dead stand, instead of pressing on the advantage and realizing the greatest benefit from all their past exertions. These are the men who are accused of hoarding or undergoing privations to place themselves in a position to accumulate, and yet when they get a scanty competence, it is asserted their characters change, and they become indifferent to what was but yesterday a habit and a practice. Now it is admitted the labouring prisoners do not consume a sufficient quantity of vegetables ; unhealthy appearance proves this ; if it be that the fixed Government price or “ nerrick ” is so high for vegetables that they can seldom indulge in them, or if it be that they purchase all they can get, it is clear that the cultivation finds a readier sale the more scanty the supply, and therefore it would appear good policy to lower the “ nerrick ” in order to enhance the supply ; the producer would then have to work up to a higher standard than he does at present, to realize the same amount of profit he now enjoys ; by this the general health and well being of the consumers would be enhanced.

127. *Lowering of legal price for vegetables noted on.*—The lowering the legal price of vegetables, is therefore one means offered to counteract the habits of laziness attributed by the Superintendent in his letter No. 169, dated 14th May to the cultivating class. But I am afraid such a partial remedy will not reach the real disease ; my own impression is that oppression and ill

health have something to do with the failure of the system, and that it works in channels and ways unknown to the officials, and likely to remain so—I say this because on one occasion, when I brought an incident to notice not absolutely wrong in itself, but only so far as bad examples work, I saw no signs of the importance of the subject being realized, and that impression was left on my mind on receipt of the Superintendent's No. 32, dated 26th April 1867.

128. *Each self-supporter only allowed to practice one trade.*—As regards the system of compelling each self-supporter to adhere to one trade, it appears to me, the enforcement of such a system, in a new and struggling country, is a fatal error. To say that it is an injurious practice to let a cultivator rear cows or pigs on the surplus fruits of his garden, and so make a double profit, appears to me a doubtful policy, but when we see the cultivators themselves suffering from scurvy, and their neighbours tainted with the same disease, to prohibit them producing all they can, approaches a crime. The Superintendent, from his letter No. 169, dated 14th May, seems somewhat shaken in the dogmas of his own creed; however this may be, it cannot be denied that the present system is a failure more or less, and in such cases sound policy generally dictates a change.

129. *The services of Burmese prisoners are not made the most of.*—I should say the finest class of all the races in “ Port Blair ” for pushing on the cultivation of the Settlement is the Burmese, but I fear their services are not fully appreciated. I tried to stir up this matter, but I fear I made little or no impression. It is asserted that the Burmese are the most difficult class to control, but I am convinced this difficulty is magnified many fold by want of consideration; they are the best cultivators for the “ Andaman Islands;” they are “ children of the swamp,” and if they only had a fair opportunity, they would show what could be done in such a country. Let them have their wives, and give them a spot of land where no other Asiatic would live,—one which would be death to the Bengali or even to the Madras Pariah,—and they will produce a garden; but the very fact of the Superintendent calling up a *body* of Burmese, and asking them questions, showed his want of knowledge of the people, and no improvement worth having will be effected unless some one has to deal with them who knows their habits and natural disposition, and is well acquainted with their language.

130. *On the sufficiency of the present allowance to prisoners.*—The Committee, in their remarks on diet, are somewhat doubtful as to whether the present scale of 2 annas a day is sufficient for the support of a convict. It is difficult to form a correct opinion from cursory observations, and it appears some information the Committee called for from the Commissariat Officer was not received in time. If the messing system be introduced, as appears was originally intended by Government, *vide* Mr. Beadon's instructions to Captain Mann, No. 17 of 15th January 1858 para 8, The point is not of much importance to the prisoners, as Government would see they obtained sufficient food, but in either case, the allowance should be sufficient to insure there being an overplus at the end of the month; this was the secret of Mr. Homfray's success, and would not only conduce to a feeling of contentment, but it would add to the health of the convicts in other ways. In the Rangoon Jail I should say the rates paid for articles of food all round are about the same at which prisoners can procure supplies at Commissariat rates (for convicts) at “ Port Blair.”

131. *Daily cost of prisoners in Rangoon Jail.*—During last February the daily cost of a laboring prisoner, for diet, in the Rangoon Jail, was one anna and nine pie. At present two annas a day is the lowest rate a prisoner at Port Blair receives.

132. *Some items enumerated which should not be paid for by prisoners.*—As far as I can judge from personal observation, there are some items which should not fall on the prisoners, and which are now debited against them at Port Blair. I allude to the oil expended in the lights in the prisoners' barracks; also the expense of having their clothes washed, and now a further item is proposed to be added by the Superintendent, and that is the cost of leather gaiters to those who will require such protection to their feet and legs while occupied in jungle clearing. These should be made of tanned buffalo hides and supplied gratis.

133. *Price of vegetables too high.*—Again the price of vegetables is excessive; one anna per pound seems a preposterous price. I had difficulty in procuring vegetables myself when at "Port Blair," and the Police Inspector stated higher rates were often demanded than the fixed rates. I cannot recommend that the price of mutton and beef be reduced; but if it were increased for free residents, this would throw a little more meat diet into the convict market.

134. *Means to be taken to see that convicts eat the meat they purchase.*—Some means should be taken to ascertain that convicts really consume the meat they purchase, and not re-sell it to free residents. It is also advisable to know what proportion of meat is actually consumed by convicts, and what by free residents. From observation I should say that not one-tenth of the meat is consumed by working convicts.

135. *Fish should be cheaper.*—Some means must be found to cheapen the price of fish for the prisoners; the Superintendent asks for 150 convicts to catch fish for some 6,000 convicts, and he wants freight for 500 sheep per mensem. I think the proposed increase to the piggery and the run for goats referred to in my No. 219, dated 14th May 1867, should be carried out as regards supplying fish; I consider the existing arrangements do not work well (we found it very difficult to procure fish for our table) and all that came into the bazaar was bought up at once; even the free police on Rs. 15 per month complain they cannot get fish or vegetables, and the Sappers reiterate the same. I would not disturb the present arrangement for supplying fish until a better was tried and proved to be a success.

136. *Dr. Kelly's idea for procuring fish.*—I think Dr. Kelly's idea a very good one, to get over two sets of fishermen from the "Madras" Western Coast, prisoners if possible; get each set two yawls, each manned by 10 men, that would be 40 men in all, and supply them with large deep sea nets; whether prisoners or freemen are employed, good remuneration should be given for successful exertions; rewards should be distributed without taxing the prisoners or the consumption of the commodity.

137. *Money allowance need not be raised.*—With payment for gaiters, barrack oil, and washing abolished, and the price of vegetables and fish reduced, I do not consider it will be necessary to raise the money allowance for prisoners.

138. *Marine Stores. Too much kept in hand; alterations suggested.*—The quantity of marine stores on hand appears to be in excess, in many items, of the demands of the Settlement; these stores hitherto have been obtained by requisitions made by the Superintendent on various depôts; on arrival at the Settlement they have been placed in the custody of the Executive Commissariat Officer. This plan is objectionable, as this Officer has various duties to perform in connection with his particular department, and as he is unable to pronounce on the necessity of issuing articles purely connected with nautical matters, there is no particular advantage gained by their remaining in his charge. Perhaps the Harbour Master had better be the Marine Store-keeper; the only objection raised was that there was no separate accommodation for the stores

available; this difficulty, however, can be obviated as the Iron Godowns for the Commissariat have arrived from England; when they are erected, the godown in which the marine stores are now kept can be handed over to the Harbour Master. I think the Superintendent should be prohibited indenting for supplies under the head of "Marine Stores," except through the office of the Chief Commissioner, as there is at present vast accumulation of many articles.

139. *List of accumulation of some articles.*—I may mention, as an example, that there were in store a short time ago no less than 20,000 lbs. of paint. The following items also appear in excess—

30	anchors.
1,392	yards canvas.
366	lbs red lead.
524	" black "
4,217	feet oars of sizes.
3,000	lbs pitch.
9,001	" coir rope.
19,024	" English rope.
2,570	sheets of copper.
3,129	" lead.
5,629	" zinc.
5,937	" iron.
2,045	lbs tallow, &c., &c.

140. *Flogging convicts.*—By the authority of the Superintendent, the flogging of convicts by Overseers is allowed. There is no doubt that the position of Overseer is very trying, and having to deal with transported convicts, requires that he should be invested with some means of inflicting punishment. At present an Overseer can at his discretion inflict six stripes with a rattan; the return I received from the Assistant Superintendent shows the majority of stripes was inflicted by one man and speaks for itself; either some divisions of convicts are more unruly than others and thus require more punishment, or some Overseers are worse tempered than others.

141. *The system of Overseers inflicting corporal punishment.*—If possible, all cases requiring corporal punishment should be inquired into by the Assistant Superintendent before the law is carried into force. The Assistant Superintendent informs me that generally cases needing summary infliction of stripes by Overseers are heard after the man has been flogged; if this could be done beforehand, it would be preferable.

142. *Financial. Actual cost of Port Blair cannot be actually arrived at, as the Superintendent omits many heavy items.*—I have not been able to arrive at a very clear idea of the actual cost of the Port Blair Settlement to Government annually. In the annual report for 1865-66, the Superintendent puts down the

NOTE.—The P. W. D. charges were—
 For 1865-66 ... Rs. 4,50,063
 " 1866-67 ... " 2,89,839
 Estimated 1867-68 ... " 3,59,700

yearly cost of each prisoner at Rs. 113, but this excludes many of the heavy items. The average strength of convicts at Port Blair for 1865 was 3,926, and the actual cash expenditure for 1865-66 was Rs. 8,69,000, or Rs. 221 a head, while that for 1866-67 rose to 14,21,000, or nearly Rs. 234 a head, the average for 1866 being 6,074 convicts present. The Military, Marine, and Public Works Department expenditure are not included in the above calculations. The number of convicts present on 1st January 1867 was 6,686, and the budget estimate for the current year is Rs. 16,39,264, or Rs. 245 per head for that strength. If to this be added cost of one steamer plying between Rangoon and Port Blair, say $\frac{1}{2}$ a lakh, pay of European force, Rs. 30,783, of Native Infantry, Rs. 16,235, of Sappers, Rs. 24,304, excluding the cost of transit of prisoners, the annual cost for each prisoner comes to something like 260 Rs. for the current year. This still excludes Public Works Department charges which are estimated at Rs. 3,59,700;

if this item be included, the cost, say, for 7,000 prisoners comes up to Rs. 300 per head per annum, and this without deductions on account of self-supporters. I am unable to account for this excessive charge; it clearly evidences want of economic management in general, as the subsistence of prisoners is a fixed charge. A prisoner should not cost more at Port Blair than at Rangoon, plus Marine and Military charges; at Rangoon the cost per head exclusive of cost of buildings, but inclusive of establishments, was Rs. 72 for the past year. I have already indicated that there can be a saving of nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ lakh of Rupees by having clothing supplied from Moulmein, and quite $\frac{1}{2}$ a lakh by restricting the supply of rice from the Rangoon Jail, by reduction of stores on hand, thorough economy in the matter of supplies and improved Commissariat arrangements, especially as regards cattle and sheep, another $\frac{1}{4}$ of a lakh should be saved; thus by proper and even ordinary care, most certainly a lakh a year may be saved to Government; the expense of hospitals is, I am sure, capable of revision and reduction. Though merely a rough outline, the above points show where savings can be effected. The real source of economy, however is to be found in the proper utilizing of labor, and getting a real return for it. To effect this, sound and well-matured plans should be taken in hand, and when once adopted, they should be persevered in. As regards the effect of climate and labor on the prisoners' health, Government have lost more by the deterioration of the convicts' health, their crowding in the hospitals, and inability to work, than all the excess of cash expenditure can show; the absence of efficient medical supervision and the want of nutritious food has, in a measure, palsied the whole Settlement; the scattering of the strength and immoderate zeal in important matters have all tended to the production of the small results one sees. In short, it has not been realized that the prosperity of the place depends entirely in the efficient employment of labor, and this again depends chiefly on what is produced out of the soil. The attainment of good results from the beneficial employment of labor mainly depend on the Superintendent; for public works expenditure is rarely of a remunerative nature, although the energy infused into the public works by Mr. Prince while Executive Engineer is worthy of all praise; yet, the commencing of the huge stone barrack until sufficient products for the use of the Settlement could be produced was a doubtful policy. Under the head of servants, orderlies, parawallahs, and so on, an extravagance has been permitted, which, considering the perpetual outcry for more labor, to say the least, admits of much pruning. Some small increase might be made to revenue by imposing house rent and increasing the price of meat, and some produce fit for exportation in empty Government vessels, such as timber and oil, might be found, but the means of raising a revenue has yet to be devised.

143. *Means of raising Imperial Revenue very limited at present.*—At present the Imperial cash receipts consist chiefly of fees paid by self-supporters, and for hired convict servants. The Local funds are insignificant. There is a Miscellaneous fund which brings in a little, but the accounts of which are not kept as clearly as they should be; heretofore the Superintendent has had the disposal of the proceeds of this fund, which is an unsatisfactory arrangement. The transactions should all be brought under the head of Local funds.

144. *Cost of Garrison.*—The expense of garrisoning the Settlement is a heavy item. The total cost of one Company of Madras or Native Infantry consisting of 92 men, exclusive of the European Officers' transit and rations, was Rs. 12,795-9. The cost of 302 police, exclusive of pay of Officers, clothing, and boats was Rs. 65,460. Allowing Rs. 5 a month as cost of rations to Sepoys, gives an addition of Rs. 5,520 as cost of 92 men of the Madras Native Infantry, making a gross annual cost of Rs. 18,327.

The cost of Sappers numbering 122, exclusive of European Officers' pay, and cost of men's rations, come to Rs. 1,932, and including rations, at Rs. 5 per

Haddo, 7	...	{ Beach Sentries ...	...	...	...	...	...	6	
		{ Havildar	...	...	...	...	...	1	
								—	7
Perseverance Point, 12..	{ Beach Sentries ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	
	{ Commissariat cattle-sheds	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	
	{ Havildar	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	
								—	12
Port Mouat, 7 ...	...	{ Sentries	...	...	...	...	...	6	
		{ Havildar	...	...	...	...	...	1	
								—	7
Hope Town, 4	...	Beach Sentries	...	...	...	...	...	4	
Viper Island, 4	...	Beach Sentries	...	...	...	...	...	4	
Navy Point, 4	...	Beach Sentries	...	...	...	...	...	4	
								—	12
Total men								...	94

149. *The continuation of this force not recommended.*—As regards the enforcement of local laws, most of these laws can be brought within the cognizance of the regular police, and for those which cannot (few and simple as they should be), a few peons would suffice. I see no utility in sending convict policemen with a body of convicts as a protection against natives, when working in the jungles. If the party is a Toledar's (numbering 25 men), then the Toledar might have a musket; if the party consists of only a few prisoners, it is just as simple to put a musket into one of their hands as to employ another convict.

150. *Other arrangements proposed.*—There is only one ground which prevents my condemning the whole system of convict police, and that is, I think it good policy to have a few responsible posts for convicts of good character; these appointments are much sought after, and they act as useful stimulants to good behaviour, but I think it would be more advantageous to do away with convict police; have a few peons, where really wanted, and regular police for superior duties, such as "Commissariat yard sentries," and then to keep up the prizes only in a more useful manner, I would have Toledars over 20 instead of 25 working men. This would give for 6,000 laboring convicts (at 5 to 100 instead of 4) 60 additional Toledars.

151. *Parravallahs and their duties.*—Besides the convict police, there are "parravallahs" or barrack watchmen, they are mostly old men. They sweep down the barracks, and watch them by day when the convicts are at work, and they are supposed to guard the prisoners at night, but this last duty is evidently a farce. Valuable as labor is at these new settlements, I consider as few sinecures should be permitted as possible; one old man would be all I would allow for each barrack to keep it clean; for the other two men some light work might be found, such as planting and guarding trees.

152. *General Police question considered in Committee.*—As regards the general question of police in a protective and repressive sense, this subject was considered in Committee, and full particulars as regards the recommendations made will be found in the Appendix.

They involve an increase of 100 policemen and a few artillerymen, a police-boat, a block-house at the end of the jetty on "Ross Island," and the palisading of all police posts. At present some of the police houses are too near the barracks of the prisoners. It is suggested that all military and police posts should hold an isolated but commanding position.

153. *Superintendent's Office Establishment.*—The Superintendent has been complaining for some time of the insufficiency of hands in his office, and he has asked for a large increase which would bring the total up to Rs. 1,475 per mensem; meantime he has been employing some of the licensed Europeans and Eurasian prisoners in his office; these men are allowed a certain amount for subsistence, and are liable to be set to such work as they may be fit for; the consequence is, the Superintendent has the command of a considerable amount of clerical labor, without any excess of expenditure appearing against his office. But the system works badly, and it is doubtful whether such an arrangement does not leave the office more inefficient than it would be were it to continue short handed. The excess of hands leads to a lot of useless work; and when the extra hands have no interest in the good management of the office, confusion and want of arrangement are sure to follow.

The sanctioned establishment and that actually employed are as follows:—

Sanctioned Establishment.				Amount.		Extra Clerks.				Amount.	
				Rs. A. P.						Rs. A. P.	
1 Head Clerk	...	...	...	300	0 0	1 Clerk	...	...	...	100	0 0
1 General do.	...	...	...	150	0 0	1 do.	...	...	...	50	0 0
1 Treasury do.	...	...	...	100	0 0	1 do.	...	...	...	50	0 0
1 Convict Record-Keeper	...	...	...	100	0 0	1 do.	...	...	...	50	0 0
1 Assistant do.	...	...	...	70	0 0	1 do.	...	...	...	30	0 0
1 Burmese Interpreter and Clerk	...	...	...	100	0 0	1 do., Assistant Superintendent's Office	...	...	...	20	0 0
						1 Printer	...	...	...	25	0 0
						1 Compositor	...	...	...	25	0 0
						1 Moonshee	...	...	...	25	0 0
						1 Duffree	...	...	...	14	0 0
						1 Assistant do.	...	...	...	10	0 0
Total	...			820	0 0	Total	...			399	0 0

This gives an additional increase of 11 hands and Rs. 399 as the increase of monthly cost, making a total of Rs. 1,219 per mensem. Some of those noted extra to the establishment are necessary, such as duffries.

154. *Superintendent overburthened with details.*—The division of labor has heretofore been very badly managed. The Superintendent has been overburthened with details, especially in the matter of money and accounts. He has to order articles from distant ports, pay for them, disburse them, make up the account and audit them himself; this has thrown a great responsibility on his shoulders, and has left this most important branch without any check, surrounded as the Superintendent is with persons whose previous character offers small guarantee for their good behaviour. This state of things is very objectionable.

155. *Treasury recommended to be handed over to Assistant Superintendent.*—I suggested to the Superintendent the propriety of his handing over the Treasury and all cash accounts, including receipt of payment for articles indented for upon the Commissariat, to the Assistant Superintendent, the advantage of this alteration is that, while the Superintendent retains the power of ordering supplies, an independent officer will see to the payment and also to the recovery of any amounts which may be due as articles are disposed of. All business transactions would thus pass under two distinct signatures, and each will be a check on the other.

156. *Treasury and Court work only nominal.*—The Treasury and Court work of the Settlement are scarcely more than nominal. When I inspected the Treasury, there were only Rs. 50 in silver, and 7,000 copper tokens in the cash chest, besides a small amount in deposit; the silver coin never exceeds $\frac{1}{2}$ a

operations of clearing jungle is seen lying about waiting to be removed or is destroyed, and among such at "Prospect Hill," I saw two valuable logs of a kind of bastard ebony, the core of which (some 4 inches in diameter) was of an intense black color, and would, when seasoned, have been valuable. I saw some Burmese prisoners as "hewers of wood," employed in dense jungle, felling trees to supply timber for the saw mill, and that is all I could learn about the Forest Department at the Andamans. In fact, the Settlement is not sufficiently advanced to supply labor at present for a separate Forest Department.

159. *Proposal to cut roads through the jungle.*—As to the proposal for a road 10 feet wide, to be cleared through the three islands from north to south, with cross-roads on either side in each island, in order to open up the country and procure a supply of timber, the idea is a very good one, if the scheme was at all practicable, and likely to be profitable; the utility of the plan would depend in a great measure on the number of cross roads to obtain means of transit to the coast for timber when felled. As facts stand, it is not too much to say, it would take 100 men half a century to complete such a task, and the work would be nearly useless when finished. The labor of cutting down the tall forest trees, and disposing of them when cut down, is very great. The roads would have to be carried over tolerably high mountains and through precipitous ravines and mangrove swamps. The roads would require to be metalled, or some means taken to preserve them in the rains, or they would become ruts, and by the time one-half of the way was completed, the jungle would most likely reappear in the parts first operated upon. The mortality which would occur, in a work where the convicts would live in a sort of perpetual malaric steam, need not be calculated, as it is very certain the work will not be commenced.

160. *Recommendations.*—For the present, what is most required is the clearing of tracts of culturable land, and in this operation any valuable trees which are found growing within the area to be cleared should be marked, and care taken to secure them in a fit state for conversion into timber; they might be girdled, if that is any improvement, and left standing till fit to be felled. If possible, timber that is fit for export, either as railway sleepers, or even for fire-wood (to Calcutta and Rangoon, where it is very dear) might be stacked, instead of being burned on the spot. Most of the large trees near the coast produce oil or rather resin, that is the "dammer" of the Indian market. By notching instead of girdling them, a good quantity of valuable resin would be procured at little trouble, and the tree would be also killed; old prisoners, useless for any hard work, might collect the resin. These simple arrangements, with a few men set apart to girdle useful trees fit for the saw mill, and convenient to water-ways, and a party of Burmese kept to fell and drag them with elephants, embrace all the forest arrangements I could recommend, till labor becomes a matter of small account.

161. *Land occupied by Mr. Green required for Commissariat godowns. The formation of a Committee recommended to value the property.*—A piece of ground has been granted by a former Superintendent to Mr. Green, a shop-keeper on "Ross Island," which is now required for the erection of Commissariat godowns. Some correspondence took place on this subject (*see* enclosure marked I), and at Mr. Green's request, I inspected his premises; the only difficulty was the adjustment of a valuation of the property. After a careful examination of the premises, I came to the conclusion that Rs. 20,000 was the outside value that could be allowed Mr. Green for his two houses, out-houses, and improvements (stated by him to have been made); his figure was at first Rs. 50,000, but he admitted to me he was prepared to accept an offer of Rs. 35,000. Just before leaving he had another interview with me, and I suggested he should put his requirements in writing, which he did, and the

paper is annexed in the Appendix. The only way of arriving at a satisfactory decision is to have a Committee under Act VI of 1857, and then the matter can be amicably adjusted.

162.—*Return of detachments; arrangements to be left to Superintendent.*—It seems advisable that when guards, either of the line or police force, are sent with convicts from Calcutta, that the Superintendent should have some liberty of action in providing for their return. During my stay at Port Blair the ship *Merchantman* arrived from Calcutta with convicts and a guard; the orders were for the guard to be sent on to Rangoon and thence to Calcutta; but as the *Merchantman* was about to return to Calcutta direct, in a season of the year when the wind is fair, and as she could furnish good between deck accommodation, which the steamers from Rangoon to Calcutta do not, it seemed advisable to send the detachment of the 9th Bengal Native Infantry back in her, which was arranged. The freight charged was far less than is levied in the private steamers from Rangoon to Calcutta.

163. *The Commander of the "Assam Valley" and seven of her crew murdered on Little Andamans.*—As the orders regarding the search for the missing crew of the *Assam Valley* were issued through me, it is necessary to notice the matter; but as a separate report will be submitted, a summary of the particulars is all that is required. Just before leaving Rangoon, a telegram was received from Akyab to the effect that, on the 21st March last, the Commander and 7 men had landed from the ship *Assam Valley* on the Little Andaman island for the purpose of cutting a spar; that after their landing a party of savages were seen dancing on the beach, and as the seamen never returned, the supposition was they had been massacred. I addressed the Superintendent on the subject. Her Majesty's S. Surveying vessel *Sylvia* was then lying in the harbour. Commander Brooker, the Superintendent, and myself held a consultation as to what should be done. It was arranged the *Sylvia* should go to the spot indicated in the telegram, and this was carried into effect with all possible speed.

164. *Result of expedition of Her Majesty's S. "Sylvia."*—Captain Brooker on his return reported the impossibility of landing at the spot mentioned in the telegram, in consequence of the heavy surf; but that he had seen from his boat a coil of rope and a sailor's blue cap on the beach, near the spot where the unfortunate crew landed. Captain Brooker states he coasted the eastern side of the Island in hopes of obtaining a landing, but without success. On the coast line a few huts were seen, but no natives whatever. On returning on board it was found that, immediately the boats had left the neighbourhood, the wary natives showed themselves on the beach. Captain Brooker fired, at 8 p. m., 3 rockets over the island and returned to Port Blair on 18th April. In the interim the Government Steamer *Kwan-tung* arrived and was despatched on the same duty.

165. *Her Majesty's S. S. "Kwan-tung" despatched to search.*—The *Kwan-tung* left Port Blair on the 18th instant, and reached the spot sought for on the following day. Two cutters were despatched in charge of the Second Officer, with Mr. Homfray and a few friendly aborigines; this party also failed to effect a landing in consequence of the surf. Several natives were seen on the beach, but none came near where the boats were; the weather looking threatening, Lieutenant Duncan recalled the boats and stood to sea for the night. On the morning of the 20th, the *Kwan-tung* again steamed to the same spot. Three boats were despatched, but a heavy south-west swell setting in, landing was again impossible. Some of Mr Homfray's Andamanese (the most expert swimmers in the world) attempted to swim through the surf, but failed, and nearly lost their lives.

166. *Lieutenant Duncan steamed round to the eastward and effected a landing, but the party was attacked.*—It being useless to remain at that place inactive, Lieutenant Duncan steamed round the south-east end of the island, and anchored in a bay six miles northward. Seeing three large huts on the beach, and there being but little surf, a landing was attempted. On Sunday morning (21st), three boats were despatched from the ship; the party effected a landing, and the boats were backed into deep water; but no sooner was the party separated from their boats than parties of aborigines were seen collecting with the view of cutting off the force. On seeing this the ship's party retreated towards the boats, but before they could embark, a shower of arrows was fired at them which wounded two of the Settlement Brigade men. The ship's party were compelled to fire to cover the retreat. The savages followed the men to the beach, and while the ship's men were wading through the water to reach the boats, the natives knelt at the water's edge and deliberately fired on the force until dispersed by a volley from the boats. Thus ended another attempt to gain information of the fate of the crew of the *Assam Valley*.

167. *Her Majesty's S. S. "Arracan" despatched, and landing effected on the 6th May.*—As I was detained at Port Blair in consequence of having to reorganize the Committee sitting to enquire into certain matters on the arrival of Surgeon Rean as Senior Medical Officer (*vice* Surgeon Cowie), I requested the Superintendent to despatch Her Majesty's S. S. *Arracan* (which vessel was waiting for me) to the "Little Andaman," to make a final effort to effect a landing and obtain some news of the missing seamen. I recommended that a small military force should be put on board the *Arracan*. The vessel reached the spot where the boat of the *Assam Valley* landed. On 6th May, the following morning, three boats were lowered in charge of Mr. Dunn, Mr. Eastwood, and Mr. Homfray, having on board the first cutter, Mr. Eastwood, Sergeant Macdonald, Lance Corporal Harris, 8 privates of Her Majesty's 2-24th Regiment, 6 Andamanese, and a crew of 13 men. On second cutter, Mr. Dunn, Lieutenant Much, 2-24th Regiment (Commanding) 7 marine service men, 1 Jemadar, 4 Sappers, and a crew of 13 men. In the gig, Mr. Homfray, Lieutenant Glassford, 9th B. N. I. (passenger), Assistant Surgeon Douglas, Her Majesty's 2-24th Regiment, 3 Sappers, 4 Andamanese, and a boat's crew of 5 men. The second cutter was backed through the surf and landed Lieutenant Much and his party in safety, and hauled off outside the surf; and here Lieutenant Glassford unfortunately changed from the gig to the second cutter. Lieutenant Much marched some distance along the coast, and seeing the natives assembling, and the ammunition being wet, he signalled for the cutter; Mr. Dunn in endeavouring to back through the surf to the beach, had his steering oar broken by a wave; another wave followed in quick succession which upset the boat. Mr. Dunn and the boat's crew, with great difficulty, swam and reached the shore in safety. Unfortunately Lieutenant Glassford (who had gone as a spectator), after the upsetting of the boat, was never seen again. Things were now becoming desperate; the party ashore made repeated signals for assistance. Their arms were useless, as their ammunition was wet, and Captain Barrow ordered Mr. Lindsay to make a raft to assist the shore party who were being attacked by the natives. The raft arrived near enough to the shore to land some ammunition. Five of the party reached the raft, but were washed off, and after severe struggle reached the shore exhausted.

168. *Heroic conduct of Dr. Douglas and party.*—Dr. Douglas of 2-24th Regiment, with 4 men of that Regiment, volunteered to bring off the party from the shore; Dr. Douglas executed his task nobly, in three trips, swimming each time through the heavy surf which had defied boats and raft and the amphibious Andamanese. The party returned on board the *Arracan* at 5-30 in the afternoon. The Andamanese were in all probability afraid of the Little Andamanese. The Andamanese came down and fired showers of arrows on the

retreating shore party, who were protected as well as could be by the soldiers in the boats outside the surf, who killed and wounded probably thirty.

169. *Discovery of the bodies of the murdered Europeans.*—The shore party found the skull of one and the bodies of 4 Europeans partly buried in the sand; a sea boot with a leg in it was taken out of the sand; a sailor's blue shirt, a blucher boot, and a coil of English rope were also found close to the rock where the mate of the *Assam Valley* had reported the Captain and men had landed. From the discoveries made by the expedition from the *Arracan*, no doubts can be entertained but that the Captain and the 7 men of the *Assam Valley* had been murdered. The greatest credit is due to all concerned in the expedition from the *Arracan*. It was a complete success as far as realizing the objects for which it was despatched; had not a landing been effected on this occasion, many months of anxious suspense would have had to be endured. As it is, the worst is known. The names of those deserving of mention, who were actively engaged, are:—

C. M. Douglas,	Assistant Surgeon,	2-24th Regiment.
W. L. Much,	Lieutenant,	ditto.
Barrow,	Captain,	Steamer <i>Arracan</i> .
Mr. Dunn	1st Officer,	Ditto. Since dead.
„ Eastwood,	3rd ditto.	ditto.
Private Murphy	} Her Majesty's 2-24th Regiment.	
„ Cooper		
„ Bell		
„ Griffiths		
Toke, Secunnee, Steamer <i>Arracan</i> .		

170. *Further operations considered.*—As regards the question whether anything should be done to further punish the savages, whose loss by the expedition from the *Arracan* was about 30. It is possible to effect a landing at the spot where the *Kwantung's* party landed at East Bay even in the south-west monsoon; but were a party landed, they would have to march about 15 or 16 miles. At low water they could march along the shore, but at high water they would have to cut their way through the jungle. It would probably take two days to make the journey. On the whole, if anything further is to be done, it had better be postponed till next December, and then an expedition might be sent to occupy the southern part for a month or so.

171. *The Burmese Refugee Prince Mengoondine.*—The Burmese refugee Prince, the Mengoondine Mintha, who, under the orders of Government, accompanied us to Port Blair, has not as yet been as suitably housed as he should be. He is lodged at present in a common self-supporter's hut on Chatham island; he will not receive money allowance, and there is some difficulty in providing for his daily wants to his satisfaction. I called three times on him, and suggested to the Superintendent several small matters which I trust will conduce to his comfort; but he should either be provided with a more suitable house or his present dwelling should be enlarged, floored, and a verandah attached.

172. *Vegetable supply.*—Since writing the above, a mail has arrived from Port Blair which has brought a reply, No. 202, to my No. 580 of 14th ultimo (see Appendix, page 885), which will be found as enclosures marked P. The only point necessary to remark upon here is the supply of vegetables. To the Superintendent's letter No. 202 (enclosure P), I have attached letters from officers of various departments,* which will corroborate all that has been written in this, and in the Sanitary Committee's report, regarding the scarcity of vegetables. I will here state that I have learned to accept with considerable reservation the statistics made up in Port Blair. Now there are some 3,000 prisoners on Ross, and I doubt, if, during the whole month I was there, a sufficient supply of vegetables for even 50 prisoners was left any one day,

* Officer Commanding Sappers.
„ „ Native Infantry.

Inspector of Police.
Commissariat Officer.

after the scramble by the private servants, for the few vegetables brought into the market was over. Again, on Viper Island (where the convalescent and chain gang, and a large hospital are maintained, prisoners, be it remembered, completely under control), I was credibly informed that, throughout the past year, the supply of vegetables had not averaged two ounces a man *per week*. The consequence of this deficiency is, that the prisoners have not stamina to withstand the effects of climate; already with the setting in of the monsoon, the sick list has risen to some 900, with a mortality of over 60 a month. For some time to come, it appears advisable for Government to buy up all the vegetables the self-supporters can produce, and distribute them to the convicts, at a very low rate, until a sufficient supply can be produced by Government. Tamarind and lime-juice should also be supplied freely. Nitrogenous food will also be required, for vegetables alone will not restore health, but the difficulty of supplying animal food is great. From a report just received, (*see enclosure marked O,*) of the 1,000 sheep shipped in Calcutta in the *Czarwitch* on 1st May, many perished on the voyage, and altogether 142 had died up to 14th idem, yet board-ship mutton is proverbially good. For the future the cultivation of Government gardens (which hitherto have been mere patches much neglected), should be vigorously pushed on, and care should be taken to grow some produce which will keep during the hot season, such as yams, onions, &c., and peas, beans, with other leguminous vegetables; bendicoys, brinjals, cucumbers, and other alkalious substances can be produced in abundance for half the year, and with care throughout the remaining months in moderate quantity. All the useful suggestions made in the papers which accompany the Superintendent's No. 202 (*vide enclosure P*) have already been proposed in paragraph 71 of this report, and if Mr. Homfray be appointed to look after the opening out of the garden land behind Aberdeen, the recommendation for a supervisor will be met.

173. *Concluding remarks. Importance of the Andaman Islands.*—We left Port Blair on the morning of the 15th May, having just been one month at the Settlement. It took a full week to inspect the various stations, and the remainder of the time was occupied in consultation with the various officials, and in correspondence. For my own part, I have come away fully impressed with the importance of our new possessions. The Andaman Islands have natural advantages such as is afforded by no other locality in India. Situated on the high road of commerce, with an excellent harbour, capable of being made impregnable, with a soil which, when turned to account, will prove a mine of wealth, and when the surface is cleared of the existing forest, there is little doubt but that the climate will much improve, and ultimately the Andamans will become the Mauritius of the Bay, capable of yielding the richest products of the East. The only thing wanting would seem to be capital, or, in other words, labor. Though I am compelled to admit that, as far as an impartial judgment serves me, the most has not heretofore been made of past opportunities, commensurate with the means at disposal, though the outlay has been great for the little returns visible; that generally the present tone of the place is not what it should be, and the fact cannot be concealed that the administration of the Settlement requires thorough revision, yet let not Government on account of previous failure, draw back, or consider the scheme in any light as one which cannot be made to succeed. To compass the means by which the teeming jails of India can be relieved of thousands of dangerous characters, and get them placed in safe keeping where their toil will be useful, and where they should enjoy a normal state of health, with more than a normal state of prison freedom, is a great and a worthy object, and one capable of being realized at the Andamans. But to achieve success, it is requisite the value of labor be duly appreciated, sound plans formed, and courage and discretion employed in carrying them out, to which may be added close supervision, and more direct intercourse with the prisoners, both medically and administratively, than has heretofore been practised; and last, though not least, due economy exercised in external as well as

internal arrangements. Acting on these principles the reclamation of the Andaman Islands can never be a failure. But to effect all this is beyond the strength of one man; when the distance which intervenes between the stations is considered, the present Superintendent is overwhelmed by details; this partially arises from want of a judicious division of labor between himself and his Assistant, who allows his time to be too much occupied in petty cases which should be disposed of summarily; still enough remains to show it would be good economy to give him another assistant. It should be borne in mind that the stations are very scattered, and the communication is kept up between them and head quarters entirely by water. Now, when from 5 to 10 miles have to be pulled over, it stands to reason that strict supervision cannot be continuously kept up; the consequence is, that important matters are in the hands of the Overseers, some of whom are prisoners, European or Native. I am convinced this system cannot work well without closer watching than exists at present. Looser still has been hitherto the medical supervision. I do not wish to dilate on this head, as it chiefly arose from the shattered state of health of the late Senior Medical Officer during many months, but I consider that when the Committee composed of three experienced Medical Officers, declare that the first thing to be done is to get the prisoners in a healthy state, my assertion that all has not been done to prevent them falling into their present condition is proved. For nine years the affairs of the Settlement have been allowed pretty well to drift; the scheme for making the Andamans a penal colony seemed to be an experiment, which no one was particularly anxious to meddle with (it is not yet known how far Government desire that colonization should be encouraged). During the whole period of nine years the only inspection made was from Calcutta, and as its present connection with British Burmah is avowedly only a tentative measure, the Chief Commissioner has never submitted any Inspection Report. Were there such a functionary as a Director General of Prisons, who, from his vast and varied knowledge of penal matters, could, after a brief tour of inspection, lay before the State Council his views, such a man would be invaluable; in his absence it might be advisable that the Inspector General of Prisons in British Burmah, or whoever is appointed Controlling Officer, should consult with the Commissariat Officers in Calcutta and Rangoon on many points which have been mooted in this report. Another undefined matter which requires notice, is the unsettled feeling in the minds of all connected with the Settlement, as to what authority they are really subject to. Now it is but natural that whoever may be the Chief of the Settlement, his instincts will draw him towards Viceregal rather than Provincial authority. So long as this unsettled state lasts, a state of things prejudicial to the best interests of the Settlement will continue to exist; for no man can serve two masters.

174. *Services of Officers.*—In conclusion it remains for me to tender my sincere thanks to Dr. Kelly for the aid he has at all times rendered me during the performance of an arduous and unpleasant duty. His knowledge of Sanitary and Jail matters was invaluable, and if my endeavours to lay before Government the real state of affairs at Port Blair have succeeded, Dr. Kelly must share whatever merits may be attached to my exertions.

To Surgeons Rean and Cowie the acknowledgments of Government are due for the industry and ability with which they handled the several subjects submitted for their consideration.

Nor should I omit to mention the names of those through whose assistance alone a very arduous work was brought to a conclusion, they are Mr. Hanley (Superintendent of Chief Commissioner's Office), and Messrs. Hall and Bernard who had to work hard early and late.

H. N. DAVIES, MAJOR, B. S. C.,
Secy. to Chief Commr., British Burmah,
On Special Duty.