

1911

EAST AFR. PROT.

3349

33349

OCT 11

Board 537

Date

SUPPLY OF LABOUR

Sept

Reports that he fears that there will be a scarcity of labour throughout the Prot in the course of the next few months. States reasons, one of which is the improper treatment of labourers. States what he proposes to do to enforce the provisions of the Master and Servants Ord. Asks for the appointment of an additional Medical Officer.

previous Paper. admin Staff Medical Staff

Mr. Fiddes.

Our policy in the matter of labour supply is that the Govt of the E. A. P. having passed a Master and Servants Ord. which is in the interests of both employer & employee shall stand aside and subject to the assistance of the requirements of that Ord. leave the employers to make their own arrangements for the supply of labour.

Improved machinery for securing more effectively the proper observance of the Ord. is of course desirable and if such closer supervision will have the effect of improving

W. E. A. P. 1911

Board 537

33471

Medical Staff

the supply of labour, so much the better.

The Treasury have now approved of the increase of the staff by 2 District Commrs & 4 Asst District Commrs next year provided that the Estimates for that year comply with the half & half principle. Sir P. Girouard will thus be able to have his three Labour Inspecting officers in 1912-13. We should certainly also press on the Estimates for 1912-13 for an extra Medical officer for labour supervision & inspection.

Inform the Govt as to the additional Political officers & the extra Medical officers as above, expressing general sympathy with his view as to the desirability of the more effective administration of the Master & Servant Ordinance.

x a sum
for getting
them at
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Govt
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2/13

18

1910-11

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x a suggestion
for getting
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dealt with
Gov^t
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18

1910-11

Mr. Butler

The P.S. ^{are} anxious to know whether there are any ^{local} medical officers wanted for the next School course (January) - they have, I understand, two candidates whom they don't ~~consider~~ to catch at once for S.A.

The Manning have agreed to our adding one M.O. to Lab staff next year in connection with the general question of the medical estate in that P.S.

See with in connection fees to practitioners

In Govt 33229 we have promised to recommend that another M.O. be appointed, provided the estimate keeps to the half & half principle.

In Nyasaland it is probable that the Govt will ask for a temporary M.O. viz Dr. Davey with the Commission, but we cannot be sure of this & we can be left sure still that the Manning will agree.

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
NAIROBI. OCT 11
BRITISH EAST AFRICA

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

No. 537.

September 25th, 1911.

Sir,

From reports which have reached me from various parts of the country I fear that in the course of the next few months, if not earlier, there will be a scarcity of labour throughout the Protectorate. This is attributable to several causes, the principal of which are the following:-

(a) Improper treatment of labourers employed by some Europeans and Indians.

(b) The recent drought and partial famine in the Highlands which has driven large numbers of ill-fed men and boys to walk hundreds of miles in search of work and which has indirectly, if not directly, caused many deaths.

(c) The increased demand for labour throughout the Protectorate.

(d) The increased output of economic products amongst the natives themselves.

(e)

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
ARTHUR HARDY, P.C., M.P.
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,
DORCHESTER STREET,
LONDON, S.W.

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THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
HERTS HARCOURT, P.C., M.P.,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,
DOWNING STREET,
LONDON, S.W.

(e) ~~Slavery~~ Sickness and plague restrictions.

2. With regard to the first of these causes, I regret to have to report that, notwithstanding the provisions of the Master and Servants Ordinance 1910 which provides for the care of servants, the European and Indian employer frequently takes no personal interest in the welfare of his labourers and allows them to be badly housed and indifferently fed, whilst if the labourer offends or does not give satisfaction to his employer he is at times flogged. Owing to the great demands upon the Administration in every district in the Protectorate I have unfortunately during the past two years been unable to ~~second~~ ^{second} more than one Assistant District Commissioner for the purpose of inspecting the labour camps, plantations and farms - and even this officer has been saddled with extra duties of Quarantine Magistrate and of Secretary to the Foundation Board - with the result that fewer inspections have been made than formerly and the interests of the natives have not been properly safeguarded.

3. The drought has undoubtedly been one of the causes of the scarcity of labour. There was early this year a regrettable scarcity of food in the Highlands owing to the partial failure of the crops last year. Steps were taken to provide food at certain centres, but away from these centres natives left their villages in

large numbers and proceeded to the fibre plantations and to the coast in search of work. As has been pointed out in previous despatches the price of a 3rd class fare on the Uganda Railway has until quite recently been absolutely prohibitive for the poorer class of people, and the only way that a native could reach the coast, unless taken there by rail by a Labour Agent, was to walk there. A few deaths from exhaustion occurred on the road, and several up-country natives died at both the Coast and after their return to their homes of malignant malaria and abdominal troubles. These deaths were due principally to the weak state of the natives and to improper feeding but the natives themselves have attributed them to unhealthy climate. The report that numbers of deaths have occurred at the coast has been spread far and wide with the result that other natives have been shy of going out to work, for when a place or district receives a bad name it becomes unattractive and men will not proceed there.

4. Although it is perhaps not quite correct to state that the increased demand for labour is a cause for its scarcity, yet if there is a scarcity at all it is all the more noticeable when the demand is great, and the demand is now enormous compared with a few years ago. The developments in fibre, rubber, cotton, wheat and wattle estates have reached a stage when it is necessary for the planters to keep up a large staff

staff of labourers and very heavy and almost simultaneous demands are likely to be made on the labour market in the near future. In addition to the estates there will be the construction of the Mbagati Railway as well as several major public works, such as the Thika Tramway, the Kilindi pier, and the Mombasa and Masai Reserve water supplies, etc., which will necessitate the employment of thousands of men.

8. Owing to the increased growth and output of economic products by the natives there is a tendency amongst several of the tribes, and notably the Kavirondo and the Sukuma, to refuse to quit their homes to work. The amount of cotton, sisal and groundnut now produced in several of the districts enables peasants to live comfortably at home without the necessity of leaving their reserves to obtain the goods which they require to pay their hut tax and to purchase the luxuries they require.

9. The restrictions necessitated by the prevalence of sleeping sickness and plague in parts of Kavirondo and for the past few months of plague at Nairobi have likewise contributed to the death of labour throughout the Protectorate. The natives are, not ungenerally, averse to any quarantine measures which hamper their

short of labourers and very heavy and almost simultaneous demands are likely to be made on the labour market in the near future. In addition to the estates there will be the construction of the Nagadi Railway as well as several major public works, such as the Thika Tramway, the Kilini pier, and the Mombasa and Masai Reserve water supplies, etc., which will necessitate the employment of thousands of men.

8. Owing to the increased growth and output of economic products by the natives there is a tendency amongst several of the tribes, and notably the Kavirondo who are really the backbone of the East African labour supply, to refuse to quit their homes to work. The amount of cotton, sisal and ground nuts now produced in some of the districts enables peasants to live comfortably at home without the necessity of leaving their reserves to obtain the means withal to pay their hut tax and to purchase the few luxuries they require.

9. The restrictions necessitated by the prevalence of sleeping sickness and plague in parts of Kavirondo and for the past few months of plague at Nairobi have likewise contributed to the dearth of labour throughout the Protectorate. The natives are, not unaturally, averse to any quarantine measures which hamper their

presence of a patient, whilst the fear of spreading sleeping sickness makes it imperative to prohibit entirely the employment of certain natives in those districts where, owing to the presence of fly or other causes, infection may be carried.

7. In order to remedy the present state of affairs as far as possible and to safeguard the interests of the natives, I propose to increase the number of Labour Inspecting Officers next year to three if the additional District and Assistant District Commissioners asked for in my despatch No. 492 of the 2nd instant are sanctioned. I have the honour further to apply for the appointment of one extra Medical Officer whose duty will be to travel through and inspect the labour areas. Many lives could be saved if medical attendance were available, and if my proposal is sanctioned the doctor will be able to satisfy himself that the provisions of Section 99 of the Master and Servants Ordinance 1910 are complied with, and that employers keep a suitable supply of medicines for their labourers and use them when required. I trust that you will see your way to approve of the provision in the estimates for 1912-13 for this extra Medical Officer in addition to the one sanctioned in your despatch No. 156 of August 18th. It is incumbent upon us to look after the welfare of the natives to the best of our ability. They contribute nothing upon

3/16/22
 26607

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2/16/22

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1912
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upon £150,000 per annum in direct taxes, and one of our first duties must be to see that those who leave their homes to procure the means of paying these taxes and who incidentally assist in the development of the resources of the Protectorate are regularly paid, humanely treated, and properly looked after when sick. We have an excellent Ordinance on which to work but its provisions cannot be made effective with our present staff. If the Government is in a position to insist upon the due observance of the obligations placed upon the employers, it will go far to remedy the threatened scarcity of labour throughout the Protectorate.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your humble obedient servant,


GOVERNOR.

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Your humble, obedient servant,

R. G. ...
GOVERNOR.

Gov 33369 Sub

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DRAFT

Est No 612 A

30. by R. Howard

1/10

14 Oct

Hi

When the Bureau took the receipt of your despatch No 537 of the 25th of September in the subject of the supply & conditions of native labour in the 5th

2. Have read your rep. with interest & I ^{share} fully in ~~regretting~~ ^{regretting} what you view as to the responsibility of ^{our} ~~the~~ more effective administration

all 20/10
Butler 2/5

1/10

to herewith
on 33471 5-2930.

7

of the Medical Students

Advance 1900

3. You will already
have learned from my
telegram of the 27th of
October that your
proposals for increasing
the admiⁿ staff of the Pa
in the coming financial year
~~proposals~~ have been provisionally

provisionally approved

by the Treasury, provided

that the Estimates comply

with the half-half

principle, so that

there will ~~be~~ ^{be} ~~no~~ ^{no} ~~difficulty~~ ^{difficulty}

in

the way of your

increasing ~~the number~~

T

~~of the Medical Students~~

~~Advance 1900~~

~~to three~~ 275

As required the
additional medical
officer ^{required for labour}
inspection purposes,
I shall be quite

prepared to recommend
the L.A.P. in the Treasury

on next year's Estimates,

subject to the half-half
principle being

attended to, I shall

additional medical
officer ^{should I please}
be appointed on

probation for three
years at £200 p.a.

and all permanent
the medical
officer

of the Master Servants

Ordinance 1900

3 You will already have learned from my telegram of the 28th of October that your proposals for increasing the number of staff of the P.G. in the coming financial year have been provisionally approved.

by the President, provided that the Estimates comply with the half-half principle, & that there will be no increase in the number of staff.

It is now difficult in the way of your

~~of the Master Servants~~
~~Ordinance 1900~~
~~to three~~ 275

As required the additional medical officer ^{required for labour inspection purposes,} shall be ~~made~~ prepared to recommend the appl. to the Treasury on next year's Estimates, ^{Estimates complying with the} subject to those half-half principles & being ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~be~~ ^{be} ~~appointed~~ ^{appointed} on probation for three years at a salary of £200 per annum.

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of the PA,
conferred

at the app. at the
end of that period.

with ~~the~~ being placed on
the incremented scale

of 200 ^{or rising} ~~increments~~

by ~~2000~~ annual

increments of £20 to £500 p.a.

R