

DOMESTIC

EAST AFR. PROT

13771

C. O.  
13777  
REG.  
REG<sup>d</sup> 23 APR 09

Name or Individual

Emerson Rev.

1909

22 Ppl

Previous Paper

Indentured Labour

Includes press cutting and proposed introduction  
of remarks upon... date for copy of master  
to be made to see

W. Antobius.

requires a carefully worded

reply

Send him a copy of the ord<sup>ce</sup> +  
say that when it was submitted for  
approval and Elze called attention  
to certain provisions which appeared to  
him to be open to objection +  
inquired the for the hope to could  
be removed or amended he must furnish  
him with a full report on the conditions  
which involved such provisions necessary  
+ upon the general policy + scope of the ord<sup>ce</sup>.

Vertical handwritten notes on the left margin, including "copy of the ord<sup>ce</sup>" and "to be made to see".

Subsequent Paper

35795

I reply the Genl stated that the main object of the ord<sup>rs</sup> was not only to secure that the return employees should be made to realize the obligation on him to fulfil the terms of the contract entered into by him, but also to secure that he should not be allowed to undertake an obligation of which he did not fully understand the terms, & ensure that he was properly treated & paid by his employer, & was therefore intended to be as much for the protection of the return as for the benefit of the white allies, between whom the Genl the persons of the various District Officers stands in the position of an arbitrator with regard to the various questions to which Lord Selkirk had called attention the Genl gave the explanations contained in the accompanying abstract prepared & also referred to in the first & second letters on subject of 7<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> of Dec<sup>r</sup> 1779/80.

In view of the explanations I had given the Genl that he proposed to leave the ord<sup>rs</sup> as a separate paper, that it must be clearly understood that when the ord<sup>rs</sup> came up for amendment, a system is proposed to the employer, would not necessarily be continued - that he was addressing the Genl in a separate despatch on the present question of

of the supply of labour to settlers & that in the despatch he had suggested that the main & servant ord<sup>rs</sup> should be combined in a general ord<sup>r</sup> dealing with the whole question of labour - that for the present, Lord Selkirk was content to accept the amendment which the Genl proposed to make in the existing ord<sup>rs</sup>, but that in due course, the letter should submit for his lordship's review the drafts for a comprehensive order dealing with the whole question for the present for view of the Board the next year & that the Genl & he should make a note of the views of the District Officers & that the new Genl should be asked to take up in his annual report the subject.

538

27/12  
I passed the draft that you were making of the amendments to the ord<sup>rs</sup> in the 11<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup> minute  
Wm. M<sup>r</sup> 27  
Draft for consideration  
J. H.  
27<sup>th</sup>  
at once  
See Col. Selkirk's further minute (inserted) of 11<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup>

Mr. Antrobus

559

I have had a letter from Mr. Adkins & P.  
on this subject, from which I gather that  
the matter is creating some interest in his  
part of the world. I therefore think  
it would be better to add to the <sup>letter</sup> ~~report~~  
the substance of the concluding portions  
of Mr. Read's minute.

Paragraph added  
as accordingly  
W. H. May

85

360

The same

Littleborough, April 28th 1908

13777

Secretary Emigration Information Office  
Dear Sir,

REC'D  
P-23 APR 08

The newspaper paragraph which I have underlined and  
with envelope to you is I think misleading. It assumes or implies  
in East Africa native labour may be commandeered for any period  
three years. That I understand is not the case, but I should  
to have your assurance on the point per return.

Will you please supply it with copy of this letter and  
ordinance referred to in the abstract so you can supply it.  
Whatever the cost I will remit to you. I would like to see a  
no idea how much to send, and yet do not wish to lose a post.  
I had better send stamps to the value of a shilling and  
I will forward an receipt.

Yours faithfully and with thanks

*James Harrison*



# Indentured Labour in East Africa.

To the Editor of THE UNITED METHODIST

DEAR SIR, In the correspondence column of your issue of February 4th appeared a letter on the above subject from the pen of the able and respected protagonist and well-known correspondent on industrial and subsidiary enterprise—the Rev. James Harrison. With your kind permission, I should like to reply to Mr. Harrison's letter.

The only natural conclusion at which your readers must have arrived after a perusal of Mr. Harrison's letter was that in East Africa nothing approaching the nature of "indentured labour" or "forced labour" exists.

Possibly Mr. Harrison is not aware of the East Africa "Master and Servants Ordinance," by which it is possible for any or any other person to secure the services of natives for any period up to three years. The "Contract of Service" is signed before a magistrate and is of a very binding character. It may be said that the native voluntarily enters into the agreement. Yes, he does, and so do the Chinese coolies who came to South Africa, and so do the slaves in the factories and plantations. An indentured person here may rise from his master's premises without leave, and if he does he may have to forfeit a month's wages, or may be sent to prison for a month with hard labour.

It is not inconceivable that a man goes away on a farm plantation, and free from the moral restraints of a civilized community, might be unjustly addicted. For example, there is nothing as far as I can gather to prevent him making his employees work seven days a week! I have heard it said that this is done, but I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the statement. In Nairobi I have seen coloured men doing manual labour on the Sabbath on the premises of Europeans. If this is done openly, it is reasonable to think it may be done in enclosed districts.

Again, suppose I am a planter and am employing my land for the cultivation of rubber, or coffee, or sugar cane, or any other crop in the industry of a deciduous six per cent or more—I shall be eager to get as much work out of my employees as possible. The Government does not tell me what constitutes a day's work for a man; I decide that for myself. Let me illustrate what I want to say. Among my hundred or more coolies I have say a few strong men, who in the course of a day can do more work than three times of thick bush. I shall employ twenty of them to do the work, for they are paid at the same rate of wages. But if I employ them twenty times as many in their place, I do them the day's work, and I have to pay wages for the extra work for ten days. If I employ only their wages for a day's work only the chance is that they will do only a third of the work of the few, and if the remainder are employed they may be employed for a day's work only, or they may be employed for two months' work, or they may be employed for a year's work. I have seen men on plantations in the colonies who are employed for a month's work only, and they have a day's work.

In the same way, I would the following be the case? A Government might employ men on "public works" and require the services of fifty or fifty workers. He could not be local (white) men, who have to bring in the necessary number of men from the surrounding tribes. If white workers are not found, then suitable natives are brought in and compelled to carry loads.

13777  
REC'D 23 APR 1909

Ever since my arrival in Africa, and how long before I do not know, there has been a persistent clamouring on the part of the white settlers for outside "indentured labour." To all intents and purposes, as I think I have shown, there is now existing a kind of local "indentured labour." The Government may call it by what name they like, "registered labour," "contract of service," or "indentured labour," but some of us think that if it was a "historical inexactitude" so well as "indentured labour" of South Africa, "Chinese slavery" it is equally correct to call the present labour conditions of this country by their present terms.

The following information may also be apropos. In the "Advertiser" for February 20th there is a report of a meeting held at the Government House, Nairobi, when the labour question was again discussed, and it was decided on the suggestion of His Excellency the Governor, Sir James Hayes Squire, K.C.M.G., to CABLE the Colonial Secretary requesting permission for the importation of indentured labour.

I am confident that no extensive plantations can be success without imported labour, and if granted no one doubts but that it will prove a boon to the settlers—but may our Church be saved from adopting harsh measures that might result in "burnt fingers."

I do not know Mr. Harrison personally, but I have read with deep interest and attention all his letters, and have carefully perused his pamphlet. Perhaps, indirectly, I was the means of starting this very prolonged discussion, for it was I who called the attention of the Rev. Robert Swallow, M.D., to the Times which appeared in the "Daily News" on September 1907, and Mr. Swallow's reply, "The Local Methodist set the ball rolling."

Yours faithfully,  
W. G. BASTIN

Rika, Mombasa, B.E.A.  
March 27th, 1909

14th May, 1969

My dear Adkins,

I return the letter from Mr. James Harrison,  
 with its enclosure, which you left with me some time  
 ago. I am afraid I have kept it rather a long time,  
 but the fact is Mr. Harrison wrote at the same time to  
 the Migrants' Information Office, and sent the letter  
 on to the Colonial Office. The subject is rather a  
 complicated one and we have just sent Mr. Harrison a  
 full reply which will, I hope, satisfy him as to the  
 information he wants. Under these circumstances I do  
 not trouble you with all the details of the matter, and  
 perhaps you will be able to tell Mr. Harrison that you

understand he has obtained full particulars direct from  
the Colonial Office.

Yours sincerely







The system is too favorable  
of the employer, and we  
would be prepared to consider the  
question of amending the Ord<sup>rs</sup>. If  
under favorable opportunity  
last case has suggested that to  
the fin<sup>l</sup> of the S.A.P. that  
the present Ord<sup>rs</sup> should  
be amended: a general  
reference being made to  
the question of matters  
below and, should any  
amendments of the present  
Ord<sup>rs</sup> be found necessary  
they should be <sup>included in</sup> ~~under~~  
the new Ord<sup>rs</sup>.

Yours

C. H.

Received to  
177/1904

566

The Under Secretary of State  
Colonial Office  
London W.C.

RECEIVED  
177/1904  
1904

The Under Secretary of State  
Colonial Office  
London W.C.

I have pleasure in returning the Copy of the ...  
to last Africa which you were good enough to send me on  
the 14 May. The Book would have been returned under the  
been that, when it arrived, I was preoccupied with other  
and for some time will not be able to do so.  
Based upon the information supplied by the ...  
in discreditable newspapers as to the ...  
some doubt you should it ... and you ...  
It was a great joy to me to observe that ...  
Majesty's present Government ... the interests of the ...  
lives in East Africa. No system can be ... from ... and ...  
do exist from time to time ... and ...  
do not see how the interests of the ...  
is well guarded so far as ...  
present.

Yours faithfully,  
*James Harrison*

*H. H. H. H.*  
*H. H. H.*

PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE, LONDON

