

The East Indians in British Columbia

A Report regarding the proposal to provide work in
British Honduras for the indigent unemployed
among them.

The Honourable the Minister of the Interior:

Sir,—I beg to submit a report regarding the steps taken by the Department with a view to efficiently dealing with the conditions among the East Indian community of British Columbia, which it was anticipated last summer would prevail during the present winter.

The anticipations were that a very large number of the community would be without work and without money,—in a word, would be public charges—and that there would be a repetition of last winter's conditions.

The steps taken in this connection were designed to prevent the possibility of hundreds of Hindus, (using this term to include Hindus proper, Sikhs and Mohammedans) becoming a burden upon Vancouver and vicinity; to offer as an alternative to the necessity of wholesale deportation to India a measure of opportunity in a country climatically better suited to them, and one in which they would be able to compete more successfully with other labour than they are in British Columbia.

British Honduras was one of the countries which, it appeared, might offer a satisfactory asylum. To permit the East Indians to judge for themselves whether British Honduras would prove attractive to them, they were asked to appoint two delegates to visit Honduras, the Dominion paying the expenses. The delegates appeared to be pleased with Honduras while there. They sometimes complained of the mosquitoes, and pointed out that the wages offered were low, but in all conversations I had with them, they appeared to consider Honduras a good place for the unemployed East Indians of British Columbia. I had no reason to believe they would not so report, but when they arrived in Vancouver, they reported strongly

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