

tion of 6415 in all the four states were 511, giving an average of 79.6 per 1000. In the state of Perak, where the majority (4983) of these indentured labourers were employed, the mortality was as high as 84.8 per 1000. Among the free labourers in that state, numbering 7384, the death-rate was lower, 48.9 per 1000.

Nor is it surprising that these high rates coincide with a high percentage of desertion. The evidence of Sir Frank Swettenham on this point is instructive, p. 403. He said:

Q. 12,417. I read last night a statement from a manager of an estate in the Malay State of Perak, an estate to which the Government Immigration officer has given the very highest character, an estate where the death-rate was 4 per cent., which is extraordinarily low, and he says that in the course of twelve months 800 people had left the estate.

12,418. You consider 4 per cent. a low death-rate? I consider it is extraordinarily low.

12,419. It is 40 per thousand? I think that is very low for Indian labourers in the Malay States.

Mr. Heslop Hill's evidence, Q. 13,229 to 13,232, seems to have been accepted by the Commission as conclusive proof that high death-rate and desertion are the alternatives of refuge from bad drink and bad management.

It is impossible to overestimate the importance of the bearing of the use of intoxicating drugs and narcotics on the problem of labour in the tropics.

In Ceylon the rapidly increasing consumption of opium has been the subject of repeated inquiry.