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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA—HOME DEPARTMENT,  
JUDICIAL CONSULTATION,

12TH NOVEMBER 1858.

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No. 15. — From C. BEADON, Esquire, Secretary to the Government of India, to Doctor J. P. WALKER, Superintendent of the Penal Settlement of Port Blair, No. 1683, dated the 6th November 1858.

I AM directed by the President in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letters noted in the margin, and to express the satisfaction of the Government that the Settlement is making as fair progress as under all circumstances could have been expected.

No. 305, dated the 4th September.  
No. 400, dated the 28th September.

2. Now that huts raised five feet from the ground have been built for the accommodation of 1,000 prisoners on Ross Island, it is hoped that the health of the men will greatly improve.

3. Regarding your plan of clearing the main land, and on the subject of the convict families, you will be separately addressed.

4. It is to be regretted that some of the convicts should still cling to the belief of the possibility of effecting their escape from the Settlement. The President in Council hopes however that the result of the attempt as reported in paragraphs 12 to 14 of your letter of the 4th September, and the suitable punishment inflicted on the men who returned, will have the effect of deterring others from so hopeless an attempt.

5. The President in Council has read the report of Dr. Gamack, dated the 25th instant, with painful interest. It would appear however that the severe sickness and mortality among the convicts has been owing chiefly to causes of a temporary nature, unavoidable on the first commencement of the Settlement, and now in a great measure removed. His Honor in Council does not doubt that your best attention will continue to be given to the sanitary condition of the Settlement. Up to the 28th of September there had been 169 deaths in hospital among 1,330 convicts, being at the rate of nearly 24 per cent. per annum. The number of sick in hospital on that date was 91, or about 10 per cent. of the whole remaining number.

6. The Senior Naval Officer has been desired to arrange for the gradual relief of the European Guard by means of the steamers taking convicts and stores to the Settlement. Captain Campbell will also be directed to furnish revolvers for 50 of the Guard, and authorized to indent for them on the arsenal.



