

**THE 1906 STATES REPORT
ON IMMIGRATION INTO JERSEY**

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INTRODUCTION

In 1906 the report of a States Committee on immigration was published. The report is now available only in French in the library of the Société Jersiaise and in the Jersey Archives. The report includes some statistics on births by origin of parents that are not otherwise available and gives a contemporary view of attitudes to immigration into, and emigration from, Jersey.

It is perhaps paradoxical that a report dealing with concerns about the French influence on Jersey is available only in French, but French was the language used in all States documents at the time. It is believed that an English version of the report did exist but it has not been possible to trace a copy. The French version has been translated by Translat Ltd and is reproduced verbatim as section 5, with just a few changes to the format of the tables to improve clarity.

The report needs to be seen in context. This paper also seeks to give that context, drawing particularly on three studies –

Mark Boleat, *Jersey's Population – A History*, to be published by the States of Jersey Statistics Unit, 2010 (also available on www.boleat.com).

Rose-Marie Crossan, *Guernsey 1814-1914*, The Boydell Press, 2007.

Michel Monteil, *L'Émigration Française vers Jersey 1850-1950*, Université de Provence, 2005. This book, available in French only, is one of the most important studies on the history of Jersey. A specific chapter on the 1906 report has been translated by Translat Ltd and is included as section 6 of this paper. The consent of Michel Monteil in allowing this chapter to be included is gratefully acknowledged.

This paper is available in electronic form on www.boleat.com.

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1. MIGRATION TO AND FROM JERSEY IN THE 19TH CENTURY

Jersey's population trends are examined in detail in the author's paper *Jersey's Population – A History* (2010). This chapter summarises the key points.

In the 45 years between 1806 and 1851 the population increased by no less than 150%, an annual rate of over 2%. The 1820s and 1830s were periods of particularly rapid growth, around 25% in each decade. This population growth both reflected and contributed to an economic boom, which resulted from a combination of circumstances, in particular Jersey's geographical location and favoured tax position in relation to trade with the UK and its colonies. The Atlantic cod trade was the foundation of the boom, bringing with it shipping and shipbuilding industries, and at times other industries also flourished including oyster farming, construction and cider production.

In the 1830s and 1840s net immigration averaged 500 a year, and in addition a significant proportion of children born in Jersey had parents one or both of whom were not born in the Island. During this period Jersey also welcomed its first tax exiles – predominantly retired military and colonial officers. This immigration was almost entirely from the UK. By 1841, 24% and by 1851, 27% of the Jersey population had been born elsewhere in the British Isles, and of the Jersey-born population a small but growing proportion were the children of immigrants. And in addition, in 1851 5% of the Jersey population were classified as other, predominantly French.

The economic boom turned sour in the 1850s for a combination of reasons, particularly the decline in world trade. And so net immigration turned to net emigration. From the peak of 57,020 in 1851 there was an 18% decline in the population on a comparable basis by 1921. In the 1860s, 1870s and 1890s net emigration averaged 400 a year. However, at the same time there was significant immigration from France. The following table shows the census data.

French born population of Jersey

Year	Total Population	French Born Population	French Born/ Total %
1841	47,544	[2,800]	[5.9]
1851	57,020	2,017	3.5
1961	55,613	2,790	5.0
1871	56,627	4,092	7.2
1881	52,445	3,972	7.6
1891	54,518	5,576	10.2
1901	52,576	6,011	11.4

Source: census reports and author's estimate for 1841.

These figures almost certainly understate the size of the French population, partly because migrant workers are less inclined to complete census returns and partly because much of the migrant labour was seasonal, the season beginning after the census was taken. Consular estimates put the French population in the 1870s and 1880s at between 8,000 and 10,000.

The French workers were sought largely to serve Jersey's new growth industry, new potatoes, an industry which was heavily seasonal in nature. The island could not provide the necessary labour itself and French labour was far more economical than British labour. There was also a

“push” factor from France – the relative poverty of Brittany and Normandy in relation not just to Jersey but also to the rest of France. This immigration was different from the previous immigration from the UK in that the workers spoke a different language, had a different religion, regarded themselves as part of a different community and also they were predominantly in the country parishes rather than in St Helier.

While immigration of “foreigners” was one factor causing concern in Jersey, another was emigration of locals. The economic downturn in the second half of the 19th century led to significant emigration of Jersey people to England and to a lesser extent the New World. Between 1841 and 1921 the censuses for England and Wales included a figure for people born in the “Islands of the British Seas”, that is Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man. Only in one year (1911) was a breakdown given, when a disproportionate number (42%) of these people were from the Isle of Man. If it is assumed that 60% of the remainder were from Jersey rather than Guernsey this implies that 34% of the total were from Jersey. The following table shows the data.

Jersey-born people living in England

Year	Born in Islands of the British Seas Total	Jersey born estimate	“Émigrés” as percentage of Jersey-born people living in Jersey
1841	11,705	4,000	12
1851	13,753	5,000	13
1861	18,423	6,000	16
1871	25,655	9,000	23
1881	29,316	10,000	27
1891	30,370	10,000	26
1901	35,763	12,000	31
1911	36,762	12,000	32
1921	38,862	13,000	37

Source: census reports.

Like all census data this table needs to be interpreted with caution. It records not only “true” Jersey people who have emigrated but also children born in Jersey of short term immigrants to the Island. However, the table shows a continual upward trend.

By 1900 Jersey had ceased to be an insular community. 28% of the population had been born outside the Island, 60% of children being born in Jersey had parents not born in the Island, and of the total number of people born in Jersey a quarter were living in England and perhaps a further 5% in Canada, Australia and other parts of the world.

These trends had a massive effect on the Island, and not surprisingly were a subject of political interest. They led to the creation of the special committee of the States that produced the 1906 report.

2. A FRENCH VIEW OF MIGRATION FROM FRANCE TO JERSEY

French migration to Jersey between 1850 and 1950 has been the subject of a detailed study by a French academic Michel Monteil (*L'émigration française vers Jersey, 1850-1950*, l'Université de Provence, 2005).

Monteil analyses both the economy of Jersey and its need for migrant labour, and the economic situation in Brittany and Normandy that led to emigration in search of work. Monteil contrasts the economic or voluntary migration in the 19th century with the previous migration of refugees.

Monteil suggests that the first workers from France arrived in the 1820s to work in the quarry at Ronez, and to help build the port of St Helier. However, this source of work declined rapidly in the 1840s leading to the significant decline in the French-born population by 1851.

The major immigration was in respect of agriculture. Monteil noted the growth of the new potato industry, exports increasing from 1,400 tonnes in 1810 to 17,670 tonnes in 1840, and in particular being able to get to the British market before competitors therefore commanding a premium price. The new potato season lasted just six weeks. Monteil commented –

“Jersey ne possédant pas de réserve de mains-d'œuvre suffisante pour l'arrachage des pommes de terres primeurs, la seule régulation de la population existant depuis toujours sur l'île étant l'émigration il était donc nécessaire de faire appel à une force temporaire de travail venue de l'étranger. Ce que firent en effet les agriculteurs de Jersey en faisant venir des travailleurs agricoles français.

In short, Jersey did not have a supply of workers able to harvest the new potato crop so French agricultural workers had to be imported.

Monteil notes that Jersey was British, and analyses why workers were sought from France rather than England. The answer was that French workers were cheaper, and also the new potato season coincided with the time of year in Brittany and Normandy of least agricultural activity.

Migration depends on conditions in both the host and the home state. Monteil explains the severe economic conditions in Brittany in particular in the second half of the 19th century. Between 1866 and 1946 more than 115,000 people left the Department of Côtes du Nord (now the Côtes d'Armor), emigration being particularly strong in 1872 and between 1911 and 1921. Economic migrants from the Côtes du Nord went either to Jersey, the French colonies, Canada or Paris.

Monteil notes that agriculture was backward in the Côtes du Nord, and he mentions the famine in 1847 when 20,000 people died. Pay rates in the Côtes d'Armor on average were half those in France generally.

The Department of Manche, including the Cotentin Peninsular, was in a similar position. Manche lost 155,000 inhabitants through emigration between the middle of the 19th century and the middle of the 20th century.

As an aside, Monteil describes what happened in the 1930s when Jersey responded to a request from the British Government to employ seasonal workers from England rather than France. The English workers were found to be unsatisfactory compared with the traditional workers from France.

Monteil's important study deals in detail with how workers were recruited, their living conditions and their impact on society in Jersey.

Monteil devoted a chapter to the 1906 report. This has been translated and is reproduced in section 6.

3. THE GUERNSEY EXPERIENCE

Guernsey's economy in the 19th century was been comprehensively analysed by Rose-Marie Crossan *Guernsey 1814-1914* (The Boydell Press, 2007) which is the source for this section. Guernsey's population did not grow nearly as rapidly as Jersey's in the first half of the 19th century, but unlike Jersey's it did not decline at all in the second half of the century. The following table shows the trends.

Population of Jersey and Guernsey, 1821 - 2001

Year	Jersey No	Increase %	Guernsey No	Increase %	Jersey/Guernsey
1821	28,600		20,302		1.41
1831	36,582	27.9	24,349	19.9	1.50
1841	47,544	30.0	26,649	9.4	1.78
1851	57,020	19.9	29,757	11.7	1.92
1861	55,613	-2.5	29,804	0.2	1.87
1871	56,627	1.8	30,593	2.6	1.85
1881	52,445	-7.4	32,607	6.6	1.61
1891	54,518	4.0	35,243	8.1	1.55
1901	52,576	-3.6	40,446	14.8	1.30

Source: census reports.

Crossan estimated that between 1851 and 1861 there was the largest net emigration from Guernsey as indeed there was from Jersey. As in Jersey there were concerns at the number of young men from Guernsey who were emigrating. The principal destinations seem to have been Australia, New Zealand, North America and the Cape of Good Hope part of South Africa.

Crossan did a detailed analysis not only of net immigration and emigration but also of gross immigration and emigration. The results usefully inform what the gross position in Jersey might be. The following table shows the position.

Gross migration flows by decade, Guernsey, 1841-2001

Period	Immigrants	Emigrants	Of which non-native	Of which native
1841-51	6,103	5,568	3,785	1,783
1851-61	4,913	7,018	4,591	2,427
1861-71	3,822	5,120	3,798	1,322
1871-81	4,283	4,680	3,261	1,419
1881-91	4,541	5,206	3,551	1,655
1891-1901	5,963	5,636	2,793	2,842

In the peak decade for immigration, 1841 to 1851, there were 6,103 immigrants and 5,568 emigrants, showing that the gross figures are much higher than the net figures. The table also shows that until 1891 to 1901 the vast majority of emigrants were non-natives. Crossan attributes the continued population growth in the face of high net emigration to the

fact that most immigrants were young people, in the age groups likely to become parents. So a significant proportion of the Guernsey born population were born to non-Guernsey born parents.

Crossan notes that the number of people recorded in the Jersey census as being residents of Guernsey and adjacent islands fell between 1851 and 1901 from 1,080 to 750. However, for Guernsey the trend was in the opposite direction, 473 Jersey natives in 1851 and 1,766 in 1901. Crossan suggests that this trend is partly explained by the step migration of French people and their Island-born children to Guernsey via Jersey.

As in Jersey French immigration began to rise in the 1870s. By 1901 the French community was four times the size it had been in 1841 and accounted for 5% of Guernsey's population, as against 11% for Jersey. The French migrants were employed in quarrying and farm work. Crossan notes that a significant proportion of the French immigrants to Guernsey cited Jersey as their last residence. She suggests that after working on the potato harvest in Jersey many then travelled to Guernsey to pick up a few more weeks work.

4. THE 1906 REPORT - KEY POINTS

The 1906 report is of interest both because it includes statistics on births not otherwise available and because of the attitudes it demonstrates. The key points in the report are –

1. Recognition that two way migration is an essential part of the Jersey economy with immigration being necessary to counteract the effects of emigration: “there is no hope of halting the emigration of our young people, and thus curbing the flow of foreign immigrants”

2. The true “French population was much higher than the census figure of 6,286. In June there is “a purely foreign population of nearly 10,000, not counting their children born here”.

3. Births in the island had been studied to identify whether the parents were Jersey, English or foreign. The statistics are shown below-

Year	Jersey	English	Foreign	Total
1843	761	761	117	1,579
1861	691	703	164	1,558
1881	616	537	198	1,351
1901	426	360	351	1,137

They show that in 1901 only 37% of births were to Jersey parents, with 32% being to English parents and 31% being to foreign (almost entirely French) parents.

4. Again, recognition of the necessity of immigration: “We must have no hesitation in recognising foreign immigration as an inevitable element of our social and political existence. Our population will be more and more recruited from foreign immigrants and their descendants, and we will have to ensure that we absorb them, if possible, without altering the British character of our population.”

5. In the past immigrants but have been assimilated into the island but “the island is beginning to be swamped, and assimilation is becoming more and more difficult.” This is largely attributed to “the ever growing number of immigrants of both sexes and the larger number of married couples of the same foreign nationality have made them more independent, more inclined to be self-sufficient, and less obliged to mix with their purely Jersey neighbours; above all since the establishment of schools run by foreign priests, who maintain foreign traditions and make it more difficult if not impossible to assimilate the children of foreigners.”

6. Concern about the characteristics of those leaving the island: “emigration is carrying off a large part of the best of our young people from the island, whether they are of Jersey, English or foreign origin, and that the place of these emigrants is being taken here by foreign immigrants who come here above all for the needs of our farming”.

7. A wish to distinguish between “good” and bad foreign workers: “Here we wish to support especially the system of voluntary registration of good foreign workers. That would supply us with the most effective means of distinguishing between the desirable foreign element and the undesirables, since only those who could produce proof of good character would register voluntarily, and this in itself would throw suspicion on those who were not registered, or rather those who could not fulfil the requirements for registration.” The report did not say how “proof of good character” would be demonstrated.

8. Concern about the failure of French immigrants to assimilate: “Immigrants and their children can live separate lives. They have been allowed to set up foreign religious associations, churches and schools managed by foreign priests, largely maintained by subsidies from foreign countries.....What is the remedy? It is hard to find one, but it would be useful to make sure that the elementary education of every child in Jersey of Jersey, English or foreign origin was received in an elementary school run by a person of British nationality.”

INTERIM REPORT

*OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE
APPOINTED TO EXAMINE THE WHOLE QUESTION*

of

**THE IMMIGRATION OF FOREIGNERS
TO THIS ISLAND**

PRESENTED BY JURÉ-JUSTICIER GERVAISE LE GROS
PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE

*Lodged au Greffe
and ordered to be printed on 29 March 1906*

TO THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED ON 9 FEBRUARY 1905 TO CONSIDER THE WHOLE QUESTION OF THE IMMIGRATION OF FOREIGNERS

The year 1906, the 21st of March

Considering that the subject which occupies the attention of this Committee is partly affected by the question of free education, which has been raised in the States since the Committee was appointed, the Committee has felt obliged to submit the report adopted by it at its meeting of 31 January 1906 to the Assembly in the form of an interim report.

The President is requested to present the said report to the States at their next session.

ERNEST LE SUEUR
Greffier

INTERIM REPORT ON THE WHOLE QUESTION OF FOREIGN IMMIGRATION IN THIS ISLAND

The question of foreign immigration is one which seriously concerns a certain number of the civilised countries of the world, above all those which have reached the most advanced stage of civilisation and welfare. The United States, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom and France attract immigrants from all quarters in search of work. The United Kingdom and France, although they attract immigrants, themselves supply a large number of emigrants who go in search of work or seek to better their conditions beyond the frontiers in overseas countries.

Jersey too is in both these cases, since it makes a large contribution to the flow of emigrants to England and the Colonies, which take from it a large part of its most capable and most enterprising young people. On the other hand it receives a flow of foreign immigrants, numerically proportional but relatively less advanced, who threaten to overflow it if measures are not taken to regulate and assimilate these immigrants and turn them, as far as possible in the circumstances, to Jersey's profit and advantage; for as we shall see below, there is no hope of halting the emigration of our young people, and thus curbing the flow of foreign immigrants.

Since English and Jersey emigrants are generally driven by the same motives to emigrate overseas, it is obvious that there is no reason to hope for a movement of emigrants from England to Jersey, since the obligation to serve in the Militia on its own is enough to deter the English workman. The statistics that we present, on the other hand, indicate only too clearly the tendency towards an exodus from Jersey of those who bear English or Jersey names. There are therefore no grounds to hope for a reversal, and in the circumstances we have to regard foreign immigration as a necessity for our country, without which it would be impossible for us to get the labour we need for our agriculture and to a certain extent to let our farms. As long as French immigrants find better working conditions here than in France, we must expect to see them continue to come, and we must also pay serious attention to the consequences and the influence they will have on the future of our island, all the more so since foreigners and their children now form a very significant part of the whole population. In short, we need them, but at the same time we have to keep a close watch on the political consequences of their presence here and that of their children.

To form a clear idea of the importance of the question, we need to survey the most salient points that emerge from the various censuses of our population and the statistics of the birth rate in Jersey supplied by the register of births.

The population of Jersey is estimated as follows at various dates given below, the last nine of which are those of the decennial census:

Year	Population	Year	Population
1806	22,855	1861	55,615
1815	22,763	1871	56,627
1821	28,600	1881	52,445
1831	36,582	1891	54,518
1841	47,544	1904	52,576
1851	57,020		

It will immediately be obvious that the population grew enormously between the peace of 1815 and the year 1851, when it reached its peak. Immigration at that time must have been almost exclusively from England, since the figures that we give below prove that inhabitants of British origin made up a large part of our population in 1843 and since that date.

It is only since 1851 that the population of the island has been subdivided in the censuses between the rural parishes and the urban parish of St Helier.

It is true, however, that the parish of St Helier also includes a rural population, but on the other hand certain neighbouring parishes also have an urban population, which largely balances the rural population figure for St Helier.

Year	St Helier population	Rural Population	Total
1851	29,741	27,279	57,020
1861	29,528	26,085	55,613
1871	30,756	25,871	56,627
1881	27,990	24,455	52,445
1891	29,133	25,385	54,518
1901	27,866	24,710	52,576

In 1901 the census gives us for the first time the population of the island according to the nationality of each person. Out of the population of 52,576 (or 51,540 omitting the garrison and their families) we find the following subdivisions:

Natives of the island i.e. of Jersey, English & foreign origin	Below 16 years old	13,677	38,189
	16-30	9,163	
	Above 30 years	15,349	
British subjects not natives of the island	Below 16 years old	1,072	7,065
	16-30	1,546	
	Above 30 years	4,447	
Foreigners	French	6,011	6,286
	Others	275	
Total		51,540	51,540

The foreign population of the island, almost entirely French, thus numbered 6,286, not counting their children born here, who are classed in the native population, and it exceeds 12 per cent of the total population of the island. The censuses in question were generally taken on 1 April. During the potato season numerous French labourers, said to be more than 3,000, arrive to work in the harvest. In the month of June, therefore, we have in the island a purely foreign population of nearly 10,000, not counting their children born here. It is also more or less certain that a very large proportion of these 6,286 foreign inhabitants of the island are adults, partly because their children born on the island are classed as natives, and also because the immigrants are largely unmarried workers, or married people who have no families or only small ones born before they arrived here.

Here is a table which will indicate how this purely foreign population is divided between the parishes according to the census:

Parish	Total population	Foreign population	Percentage
St Helier	27,145	2,538	9%
St Brelade	2,231	233	10%
St Ouen	2,246	258	11½%
St Martin	2,691	402	15%
St Clement	1,503	221	15%
Grouville	2,513	387	15½%
St Pierre	2,360	362	15½%
St Saviour	4,053	688	17%
St Lawrence	2,292	386	17%
St John	1,614	274	17%
St Mary	931	163	17½%
Trinity	1,969	374	19%

According to researches in the register of births, marriages and deaths for the following four years, which represent four periods of roughly twenty years, 1843, 1864, 1881 and 1901, births in this island, divided between the parish of St Helier and the rural parishes, were as follows:

Year	St Helier	Rural parishes	Total births
1843	910	669	1,579
1861	875	683	1,558
1881	764	587	1,351
1901	599	538	1,137

We shall subdivide the totals into three categories according to the origin of the names of the fathers of the children, i.e.

1. Births of Jersey origin
2. Births of British origin
3. Births of foreign origin

The names of foreign origin only include those foreign names recently introduced into the island. No Jerseyman of the old stock could be mistaken in making this analysis; and the author of these tables has devoted the greatest care to them and believes that these figures for births of foreign origin are rather below the true figure than above it. Moreover the figures for the four years in question, having been compiled on the same principles and in the same way, offer a precise and exact comparison and provide a firm basis for our conclusions.

Births of Jersey origin are numbered as follows for the whole island, subdivided into the parish of St Helier on the one hand and the rural parishes on the other:

Year	St Helier	BIRTHS IN JERSEY		Total
		Rural parishes		
1843	265	496		761
1861	256	435		691
1881	274	342		616
1901	197	229		426

The point to notice here is the enormous reduction in births of Jersey origin, especially in the rural parishes. At St Helier the reduction is less, no doubt because many of the rural families have come to live in town, but the movement in the town is very marked since 1881, and in the country since 1864.

Births of British origin for the four years in question are as follows, subdivided into the town of St Helier and the rural parishes, viz.:

Year	St Helier	ENGLISH BIRTHS	
		Rural parishes	Total
1843	575	126	701
1861	541	162	703
1881	407	130	537
1901	279	81	360

The population of British origin has never been very numerous in the countryside, and has established itself largely in the town; it is in town that we find the enormous reduction in births since 1861, a fall of nearly 50 per cent.

It will also be noticed that the number of births of English origin was higher in 1861 than that of births of Jersey origin, a proof of the extent of English immigration since 1815; before that date, everything indicates that the population of Jersey was made up almost entirely of people with Jersey names and origins.

We now come to the births of foreign origin, which since 1881 have developed very considerably. However, this increase in births of foreign origin, although considerable, in no way compensates for the fall in Jersey and English births, and the result is a fall in the total number of births on the island since 1861 of more than 400 a year.

The four years selected for our examination give us the following results for the foreign birth rate, subdivided between urban and rural parishes, viz.:

Year	St Helier	FOREIGN BIRTHS	
		Rural parishes	Total
1843	70	47	117
1861	78	86	164
1881	83	115	198
1901	123	228	351

That is, in the rural parishes the foreign births have quintupled since 1843, and in the whole island they have tripled in the same period.

The following tables summarise the tables above.

Year	Jersey	BIRTHS ON THE WHOLE ISLAND		
		English	Foreign	Total
1843	761	701	117	1,579
1861	691	703	164	1,558
1881	616	537	198	1,351
1901	426	360	351	1,137

Subdividing these figures between the parish of St Helier and the rural parishes we find the following results:

	1843			1861			1881			1901		
	Jer	Eng	For									
St Saviour	30	17	6	44	30	14	31	33	23	27	17	32
St Clement	30	12	1	27	8	4	24	7	5	7	9	13
Grouville	48	18	2	31	33	18	33	14	11	16	11	25
St Martin	57	20	11	71	31	13	52	16	19	26	10	20
Trinity	54	5	4	36	3	3	37	3	13	26	4	28
St John	55	6	2	33	4	9	30	5	8	16	3	16
St Mary	21	2	2	14	2	2	19	3	4	11	1	9
St Ouen	74	4	3	62	4	1	43	7	5	30	3	13
St Peter	39	11	5	39	14	6	31	18	17	37	6	25
St Brelade	36	20	5	39	25	6	17	12	2	15	8	17
St Lawrence	43	211	6	39	8	10	25	12	18	18	9	30
Sub-total	406	126	47	435	162	86	342	130	125	229	81	228
St Helier	265	575	70	256	541	78	274	407	83	197	279	123
Total	761	701	117	691	703	164	616	537	208	426	360	351

We observe:

1. that the births of foreign origin for the *whole island*, which in 1881 were little more than a third of the births of English origin, almost *equalled* them in 1901;
2. that the births of foreign origin *in the countryside*, which in 1881 were fewer than those of English origin, were almost *three times* as many in 1901; and
3. that the births of foreign origin *in the countryside*, which in 1881 were a third of those of Jersey origin, *equalled* them in 1901.

The births on the island since 1843 are summarised below, according to the origin of the children's fathers.

Year	ORIGIN			Total
	Jersey	English	Foreign	
1843	48.2%	44.3%	7.5%	1,579
1861	44.3%	45.1%	10.6%	1,558
1881	45.6%	39.8%	14.6%	1,351
1901	37.4%	31.7%	30.9%	1,137

Everything indicates that these trends will continue, and experience over the twenty years since 1881 shows us the extent of the changes that will have taken place by 1921, and forces us to reflect seriously on a situation that threatens such a marked reduction of the purely Jersey and British elements in the island. We estimate that by 1921 births of foreign origin will almost equal those of Jersey and English origin put together.

In these circumstances we must have no hesitation in recognising foreign immigration as an inevitable element of our social and political existence. Our population will be more and more recruited from foreign immigrants and their descendants, and we will have to ensure that we absorb them, if possible, without altering the British character of our population.

We must point out that there is a growing tendency among us to become closer to our neighbours, to facilitate communications with France and to 'bridge over' the arm of the sea that separates us. This can only increase the number of immigrants, for if visitors or trippers from France come over for pleasure in large numbers, we shall see a class of immigrants very different from the labourers and one it will not be so easy to assimilate. It is in the nature of things that hotels, shops and the numerous trades that cater for the needs of foreign visitors will be supplied by French immigrants rather than by the British element. We shall see the emergence of a numerous class of 'outlanders' who are better educated than the peasant farm labourers and who by their peaceful penetration will create an 'outlander question' which is important in a different way from that of the absorption of the labourer and his children.

We do not have the exact data to establish the precise number of persons who form part of the island's population and who are children or descendants of foreigners, but if we take as a basis the figures for births of foreign origin since 1843 supplied by the registers and take the native population of the island in 1901 as 38,189, we can estimate that it must be made up as follows:

17,013 of Jersey origin
15,779 of English origin
5,397 of foreign origin.

But since it is certain that emigration from Jersey since 1843 has removed proportionally more persons of Jersey and English origin than of foreign origin, it is also certain that a larger number of persons of foreign origin have remained in the island, and consequently it would be correct to estimate the population of foreign origin at about 6000, or 12 per cent of the whole population.

We have seen from the census of 1901 that the purely foreign element of our population, that is the foreign born, is 12 per cent of the whole population, and when added to the native born population of foreign parentage they make up nearly 35 per cent of the population of the island who are neither Jersey nor English by origin. We believe that in the countryside or at Trinity the purely foreign element rises to 19 per cent, and the native born of foreign origin can hardly be less numerous, nor can the population of foreign origin be less in our rural parishes.

Far be it from us to say that there are not some Jersey people of foreign origin who are just as good Jerseymen and women as those of the old stock and on the same level as them when it comes to their obligations to the country and to the British Empire. Assimilation has been all the more effective for them because the number before 1881 was relatively low, and also because we have seen that births of foreign origin have increased so much since 1881 that 34 per cent of all births are now of foreign origin. Everything leads us to believe that the increase in the future will be in proportion. The island is beginning to be swamped, and assimilation is becoming more and more difficult. Formerly immigrants for the most part married Jersey women, and their children had no difficulty in being absorbed into the purely Jersey population, but for the last 20 years the ever growing number of immigrants of both sexes and the larger number of married couples of the same foreign nationality have made them more independent, more inclined to be self-sufficient, and less obliged to mix with their purely Jersey neighbours; above all since the establishment of schools run by foreign priests, who maintain foreign traditions and make it more difficult if not impossible to assimilate the children of foreigners.

It is important not to lose sight of the figures we gave above, especially those that concern the rural parishes, for it is in these parishes that we see the French element making so much progress that it will end up by becoming dominant, and we shall see the administration of our rural parishes pass into the hands of persons whose education for the most part has been in foreign schools, and who will be largely under the influence of foreign ecclesiastics. Once the

municipal government of our rural parishes has passed under the domination of the foreign element, it must follow that the Jersey element will be completely overshadowed in the States. In these circumstances our very institutions, in which the principles of autonomy are so firmly established, will become a danger to the country. This danger is very real, and to fight it we will have to assimilate the foreign element, control its education and eliminate foreign influences.

As our statistics show, it is since 1881 in particular that the fall in births of Jersey and English origin and the rise in births of foreign origin have been accentuated. These trends were already beginning in 1861, but it was not until around 1881 that they took on the alarming forms that have raised the questions which now concern us.

It is not difficult to trace the causes that have led to these great changes. Here as elsewhere we find a tendency for the population to move to the large towns, to the colonies and abroad; but we also find a less pronounced taste for farm work, possibly caused by the development of elementary education and the ambitions that it tends to arouse; we have seen the disappearance of the great shipbuilding industry; we have witnessed the departure of the great Newfoundland trade and the replacement of sail by steam, the creation of rapid communications and so on. All these have helped to change the direction of our work, and to remove the most enterprising part of our population; perhaps too the changes made to the law of inheritance and the more egalitarian tendency have also contributed, while the reduction of the rights of the *amés* may have induced them to give up the cultivation of their paternal acres, perhaps also the extension of the right to make a will, which must soon reach its peak, and the duty of service in the Militia, a heavy obligation on Jerseymen since 1881, but not imposed on the foreign immigrant. Competition from foreign labour and the small foreign farmer, which has changed the conditions of existence and social life in the countryside, has also discouraged the native farm labourer and driven him towards the town, to England, and to the colonies. The new potato industry has no doubt also had a big influence on immigration, but it is very noticeable that this new industry, which has brought so much money into the country and has led to a large rise in the value of land in Jersey, has not been able to keep more of our native farmers and landowners here. It is clear that the material profit has not been enough, and that the causes of the exodus of our young people are causes that cannot be removed as long as agriculture remains our only important industry.

The growing of early potatoes, which has not been able to keep young Jersey people here, has opened the gate even wider to the admission of foreigners, who replace them and who also tend, by their competition, to drive out the indigenous element, which is increasingly averse to farm work.

It may be claimed that there will soon be a halt, that the flow of immigration will one day be slowed down if not stopped, and that the assimilation of the foreign element will end by being complete, and that the dangers we point out will be averted; but it must not be forgotten that for this to happen we would also have to slow down or halt the flow of emigration of the flower of our native young people. It is difficult to imagine how that could be done, since we have only one large industry, farming, which is falling into the hands of foreign immigrants and their children, and so the flow of emigrants is removing not only the Jersey and English element but also the best assimilated of our young Jersey people, the children of foreigners, who follow the example of others and share their ambitions. This leaves a gap in the island which will continue to be filled, as in the past, by immigration of the same class as that from which they originate.

The situation is aggravated, from our point of view, by the privileges granted without formalities or dispute to the children of foreigners simply by virtue of being born on the island.

First of all any child of a foreigner, even of a foreign father and mother, born on the island is permitted to share all the privileges of a Jersey native without any formality or option, or oath of allegiance or any request on his part, in spite of the fact that he is claimed as a citizen or subject by the country of origin of his father. He can become an elector or principal of a parish without any other formality than possession of the property required by law; he can take part in any election to public office by virtue of the law, or even become himself a municipal officer: constable, deputy, even a juréjusticier, and at the same time be the son of a foreign father and mother, brought up in a foreign school, and he and his family may be under the influence and direction of foreign ecclesiastics.

As long as the number of immigrants was moderate and births of children of foreign parentage were not numerous, their absorption into our indigenous population was easy; all the influences contributed to it: marriage, religion, material interest, social life and the preponderance of Jersey people etc. Nowadays these influences hardly have the same effect. In many cases the effects are quite the opposite, and absorption is more and more delayed.

MARRIAGE. There are nowadays a great many married couples who are both of foreign nationality, and there are relatively fewer marriages with Jersey people of the old stock.

RELIGION. The arrival here of so many foreigners, and the birth on our soil of their children have attracted a large number of foreign ecclesiastics, who are distributed throughout almost all the parishes of the island, and whose very obvious aim is to exercise and defend their exclusive influence on all this population of foreign origin. The establishment here of several foreign religious associations has only added to these foreign influences, which have already grown so powerful that the purely British religious organisations which once hastened the absorption of foreign immigrants now only have a comparatively weak influence as agents of assimilation.

EDUCATION: Foreign schools are found everywhere, under the direction of foreign priests, who may perhaps conform to the letter of our law, but who, maybe without wishing it, contribute materially to delay or prevent the assimilation of the children of foreigners born on our soil.

SOCIAL LIFE AND PREPONDERANCE OF JERSEYMEN: As long as Jersey natives are preponderant in the countryside, and the well-off landowners still live in their parishes, social influences will be all in favour of the fairly rapid assimilation of the foreigner and his children, but when the population in the countryside becomes more and more impregnated with foreign blood, and well-off farmers and landowners are rarer and rarer there, the immigrants and their children will be self-sufficient, and the Jersey element will no longer be as dominant as it was in the past; the influences will in fact tend to come from the other direction, and instead of the assimilation of the French by the Jersey people, it is to be feared that the opposite will happen: that is, Jersey people will be assimilated by the French, as the old Jersey influences become less and less effective, and the flow of immigration continues to reinforce the foreign element.

The municipal government of each parish is still carried on under Jersey influences, the parish notables and above all the elders are still of the old Jersey stock, but each year sees their numbers diminish and the number of landowners of foreign origin increase. Once the municipal government of the parishes has changed hands, the representation of the parishes in the States will fall into the hands of a majority of foreign origin.

We believe that we have established above that emigration is carrying off a large part of the best of our young people from the island, whether they are of Jersey, English or foreign origin, and that the place of these emigrants is being taken here by foreign immigrants who come here

above all for the needs of our farming. We have also established that the number of foreigners is already very considerable and tending to grow; that their children and descendants are also very numerous and also increasing largely. In these circumstances it becomes urgent for us to consider the whole question, in order to regulate the conditions under which these immigrants establish themselves here, and to ensure that their children born on our soil, who are the Jersey citizens of the future, are brought up in such a way that there is no doubt of their loyalty to the British Empire and of the use that they will be able to make of the autonomy and self-government which is the heritage of the people of Jersey.

The question of immigration pure and simple is twofold: the immigration of labourers who come to help in the harvest of potatoes and grains, and who return to their own country after the harvest; and the immigration of labourers who are looking for permanent work and who establish themselves here indefinitely.

We have the greatest interest in encouraging and even favouring both these forms of immigration, as long as they do not exceed the needs of our island. It must therefore be our duty to look for ways by which we can ensure:

1. that the persons who come here for the season or to establish themselves are respectable, sober, peaceable and hard working;
2. that worthless fugitives from justice are removed from the island by all means that will not have the effect of discouraging the temporary or permanent immigration of suitable persons whom we need for our farms;
3. that the search for work is facilitated for all good workmen through an employment agency, a voluntary registration bureau or other practical means.

Here we wish to support especially the system of voluntary registration of good foreign workers. That would supply us with the most effective means of distinguishing between the desirable foreign element and the undesirables, since only those who could produce proof of good character would register voluntarily, and this in itself would throw suspicion on those who were not registered, or rather those who could not fulfil the requirements for registration.

The rolls of our correctional court bear witness each week to the considerable and growing number of offences committed by foreigners. The annoyance and difficulties often caused by foreign labourers in the countryside would appear to confirm what we learn from the court rolls: that there is now a larger number of undesirables in the island than even in the very recent past.

It is true that the Royal Court has the right, which it frequently exercises, to inflict the penalty of deportation on those who are brought before it and accused and convicted of a crime, but it is to be feared that the infliction of this penalty if too often repeated could have disastrous consequences for the immigration of respectable workers. It is certain that to a great extent the fear of deportation has the effect of keeping desirable and undesirable immigrants on the path of good behaviour, but unfortunately this penalty is a two-edged sword: while it rids us of the ne'er-do-wells who are unlucky enough to be caught, it may sometimes deprive us of the worker whom an accident or a moment of aberration has brought before the Court. However, if it is acknowledged to be possible to implement the idea of voluntary registration, and the Royal Court is willing to allow the registered worker a privilege similar to that granted by the First Offenders Act, it might be that the fear of deportation would be very much moderated.

We now turn to the question of the assimilation of foreigners' children. As we have shown above, formerly the assimilation of the children of immigrants was easier, because of the influences that surrounded them; everything helped towards it, but nowadays this is no longer the case. Family, school and church are now outside Jersey or English influence. Immigrants

and their children can live separate lives. They have been allowed to set up foreign religious associations, churches and schools managed by foreign priests, largely maintained by subsidies from foreign countries, with an object which it is difficult to identify, because if all this had been due to religious propaganda it would not have been difficult to leave it under the control of British associations or ecclesiastics.

What is the remedy? It is hard to find one, but it would be useful to make sure that the elementary education of every child in Jersey of Jersey, English or foreign origin was received in an elementary school run by a person of British nationality.

We have confined ourselves up to now to informing you of the circumstances which in the past appear to us to have caused the emigration of our young people and facilitated the immigration of foreigners in their place. We have also judged that these causes continue to exist and that they are still producing the same results. It remains for us to point out to you another circumstance that may very soon aggravate the situation. We refer to the new law on the Militia, which has not yet come into force. It is undeniable that the general terms of this law are much more rigorous than the old laws and customs, and we believe that it might perhaps be useful to appreciate how far this law may in future accelerate the exodus of those who are and will be subject to its requirements, and thereby increase the number of those who escape from it, that is immigrants and foreigners.

In the past Jerseymen have always defended their island against armed invasion and they are always ready to defend their rights and privileges, but they have never had to defend themselves against an attack or invasion as formidable, although peaceful, as that which threatens them today and which seems to have been largely favoured by the very measure that aims to defend the island against an enemy military invasion.

PART 3 CHAPTER 2

THE POLITICAL RESPONSE: THE REPORT OF THE 1906 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION TO JERSEY

[This is a translation by Translat from the French original and has not been edited. However, footnotes have been removed as almost all refer to the 1906 report which is reproduced in full in this paper. Some other references have been moved from footnotes to the text and are shown in square brackets as any phrases that refer to other parts of the book.]

At a meeting of the States of Jersey in 1897 the Bailiff of the island pointed out that sooner or later the deputies would have to examine the question of immigration in detail. It was a matter of regulating as dispassionately as possible the problems raised by the substantial French presence.

Wishing to provide a political response to the numerous questions posed by immigration, on 9 February 1905 the States appointed a committee, which was instructed to consider the whole question of foreign immigration. Evidently its remit would be to examine the problems raised by the massive arrival of French people in the island.

The committee published its conclusions in a report presented to the States on 21 March 1906, which was to serve as the basis for discussion and the drafting of new legislation.

The 1906 report

This report is essential for the history of French immigration in Jersey. In fact it was the first official document to deal with the question. It tried to answer at the same time the two questions that concerned the coming of French immigrants to the island. On the one hand, how were the movements of seasonal workers to be regulated to avoid inconveniences for them, and to prevent problems in the host country? And on the other hand, since it was apparent that these workers were increasingly eager to stay in Jersey for a long time or even settle there for good, the report studied the means of controlling this immigration, which a growing section of the population was inclined to find increasingly 'invasive'.

The preliminary findings of the committee's report on French immigration

The report began by stating that movements of population were an everyday occurrence in both France and the United Kingdom, and that the arrival of immigrants was not to be regarded in isolation, as a unique one-way phenomenon.

“The United Kingdom and France, although they attract immigrants, themselves supply a large number of emigrants who go in search of work or seeking to better their conditions beyond their frontiers in overseas countries.”

Jersey too was in both these situations, since it welcomed immigrants while it was itself a country of emigration. In fact it made a large contribution to the flow of emigrants to England and the Colonies, which removed from it a large part of its most capable and most enterprising young people. Moreover,

“... it receives a flow of foreign immigrants, numerically proportional but relatively less advanced, who threaten to overflow it if measures are not taken to regulate and assimilate these immigrants and turn them, as far as possible in the circumstances, to Jersey's profit and advantage.”

The French presence was felt to be necessary, but it was not without consequences for the daily life of the country; in particular, from the introduction the report referred to the possible political implications of the presence of a large foreign community on the island's soil.

“As long as French immigrants find better working conditions here than in France, we must expect to see them continue to come, and we must also pay serious attention to the consequences and the influence they will have on the future of our island, all the more so since foreigners and their children now form a very significant part of the whole population. In short, we need them, but at the same time we have to keep a close watch on the political consequences of their presence here and that of their children.”

Population figures taken from the census of 1901 were then given and commented on at length. The gross figure for 1901 was 52,576 inhabitants, or 51,540 residents after deducting the English soldiers in the garrison on the island. Of these 51,540 persons, 38,189 had been born on the island, and 13,351 came from abroad. The latter included 7,065 British subjects not born on the island and 6,286 non-British foreigners, among them 6,011 French people, or 12 per cent of the total population. This figure of course did not include the seasonal labourers, who could be estimated at about 3,000 persons. In the month of June, in the middle of the early potato harvest, when the influx of seasonal farm labourers was at its peak, there was a purely foreign population of nearly 10,000, ‘not counting their children born here’, the report adds.

The report went on to analyse the percentage of foreigners by parish and found that, because of the nature of the immigration, the population of French origin was concentrated above all in the rural parishes. The figures ranged from 9 per cent for the parish of St Helier (2,538 foreigners out of 27,145 inhabitants), to 19 per cent in the parish of Trinity (374 foreigners out of 1,969).

The anxieties expressed by the committee

Besides the problems of the large number of non-British foreigners who were permanent residents of the island, the committee was also alarmed by a comparison of the birth rates of the three communities present on the island. Table 19 reveals the demographic dynamism of the foreign population, principally French, which in 1901 had almost as many children as the British group, even though the latter was 15 per cent more numerous.

TABLE 19

Comparison of the birth rates of the three communities present in Jersey in 1901

Year	Total of births	of which children of Jersey families	of which children of British families	of which children of foreign families
1881	1,351	616 (45.6%)	537 (39.7%)	198 (14.7%)
1901	1,137	426 (37.4%)	360 (31.7%)	351 (30.9%)

Source: *Report on immigration*, publications of the States of Jersey, March 1906, p. 13.

One must not forget to relate these figures to the numerical weight of each of the communities present on the island. For example, it must be noted that the English community comprised 7,065 persons, while the French numbered 'only' 6,011.

In 1901 births to foreigners practically equalled the births of English origins, a fact the official report does not fail to point out, certainly with alarmist concerns at the back of its mind, as the following remark suggests:

"Everything indicates that these movements will continue, and experience over the twenty years since 1881 shows us the extent of the changes that will have taken place by 1921, and forces us to reflect seriously on a situation that threatens such a marked reduction of the purely Jersey and British elements in the island."

The proposition is clear: the fall in the 'purely' Jersey and British components of the population is perceived as a threat by the authors: a social threat, perhaps, a cultural threat without a doubt. The following lines make the nature of this threat clear to the reader:

"In these circumstances we must have no hesitation in recognising foreign immigration as an inevitable element of our social and political existence. Our population will be more and more recruited from foreign immigrants and their descendants, and we will have to ensure that we absorb them, if possible, without altering the British character of our population."

The problem is stated precisely: Jersey risks losing its British character. This was a relatively recent preoccupation in Jersey and doubtless the result of the growing influence of the English community on the island.

During the second half of the 19th century, many people had reaffirmed their Norman culture and identity, as a reaction to the two influences, French and English, by which they felt threatened [see the previous chapter]. But in 1906 it would seem that only the first influence was still considered a major danger. The anti-French riots of 1900 at the time of the Boer War may still have been present in people's minds, but even more so the arguments over the installation in the island of numerous religious congregations which originated in France.

It must not be forgotten that in 1906 the bulk of the Jersey press was in English, all the daily newspapers being in English from this time. This had a great influence on public opinion.

Furthermore, since 1900, when the use of English in the proceedings of the States was made legal, the French language had lost a great deal of ground, even in the fields in which it seemed invulnerable, that of official publications among others.

The committee also evoked the constantly increasing closeness to the great French neighbour, thanks in particular to progress in means of communication. This closeness could have disastrous consequences for the future of the island community. The committee voiced the fear that if visitors and trippers came to enjoy the island in large numbers, there was a risk that a new category of immigrants would begin to arrive: people whose occupations were connected with tourism, hoteliers, merchants and so on. The committee was wary of them, for they would be much more difficult to integrate. The view of the official report was that

“We shall see a class of immigrants very different from the labourers and one it will not be so easy to assimilate. (...) We shall see the emergence of a numerous class of ‘outlanders’ who are better educated than the peasant farm labourers and who by their peaceful penetration will create an ‘outlander question’ which is important in a different way from that of the absorption of the labourer and his children.”

Moreover the report evaluates the number of inhabitants of Jersey who, although classed as of Jersey origin, could be considered of foreign, that is French, origin. The authors refer to the children of French parents, born on the island and enjoying Jersey nationality by virtue of the *jus soli* which applied on the island. Their number was calculated from the figures for the foreign population present since 1843, taking into account the fact that most emigrants from Jersey were subjects of Jersey or English origin. The report arrived at a percentage, quite plausible in view of the figures at our disposal, of 25 per cent of the inhabitants counted in 1901 who were of foreign origin (that is, about 12,500 to 13,000 inhabitants). It estimated that in the countryside, where the French element was strongly represented, the population of foreign origin must have been around a third of the total on average.

One can detect in this a kind of obsession with the purity of the race, reinforced by an unconcealed fear of an invasion of French people and their descendants.

Would these new Jersey men be as good citizens as those of the old stock? The fear that the new arrivals would cease to integrate seems to have been very real, and was one of the principal concerns of the authors of the report.

“Far be it from us to say that there are not some Jersey people of foreign origin who are just as good Jersey men and women as those of the old stock and on the same level as them when it comes to their obligations to the country and to the British Empire. Assimilation has been all the more effective for them because the number before 1881 was relatively low, and also because we have seen that births of foreign origin have increased so much since 1881 that 34 per cent of all births are now of foreign origin. Everything leads us to believe that the increase in the future will be in proportion. The island is beginning to be swamped, and assimilation is becoming more and more difficult.”

This is strong language: the island is beginning to be swamped. The report goes on to raise the principal fear of the rural population, more and more impregnated with foreign blood, as well-off landed proprietors became rarer in the countryside.

The allusion here is to the nature of the rural population and the profound transformation it was

undergoing under the influence of the installation of small peasants from France [cf. chapter 1 of this part]. The fear expressed could also have been described as cultural: the old stock Jersey people feared being submerged by the foreign population, which was becoming a majority in the countryside.

“... instead of the assimilation of the French by the Jersey people, it is to be feared that the opposite will happen: that is, Jersey people will be assimilated by the French, as the old Jersey influences become less and less effective, and the flow of immigration continues to reinforce the foreign element.”

The other anxiety made explicit in the report is that of seeing the political institutions of the island profoundly affected by an influential foreign group, and above all of seeing all or part of the power pass into the hands of a majority of foreign origin, with all the risks that can be read between the lines of this formula. Certainly the municipal government of each parish was still carried on under Jersey influences, and power was still in the hands of the local elites:

“... the parish notables and above all the elders are still of the old Jersey stock, but each year sees their numbers diminish and the number of landowners of foreign origin increase.”

A political crisis was looming in the relatively near future, for as the report went on to underline a little later, once the government of the parishes had changed hands, their representation in the States would fall into the hands of a majority of foreign origin. The islanders were afraid of the disappearance of their autonomy and of the self-government that they enjoyed within the British Empire. Self-government, in the form of the States, was, the report reminded readers, the heritage of the people of Jersey. They were proud of being different by being Jerseymen, and they wanted the outside world to recognise and accept this difference.

The frequency of the expression 'of foreign origin', the agreed euphemism to refer to the French and their descendants, is remarkable; the term is used several dozen times in the report, no fewer than six times on page 15 alone! Apart from the anecdotal aspect, it also denotes a great degree of distrust of the foreign element and a certain fixed idea, already apparent before, the aspiration for an island with a homogeneous and controllable population.

The views of the committee on the evolution of French immigration in the 1900s

The first French immigrants had found it all the easier to integrate into Jersey society since many of them married women from the island, the report notes on page 15. Their children became altogether Jersey and had no difficulty in merging into the population described as of pure Jersey stock. The large number of marriages between the first French farm labourers and young women from the country can doubtless be explained on the one hand by the fact that the great majority of them were young single men (these were the first to try their luck abroad), and on the other by the shortage of local young people of marriageable age. The report underlines in the preamble that Jersey was at this time supplying numerous candidates for emigration: above all young men wishing to make a career, if not a fortune, in the navy, commerce or by settling in the English colonies.

Nor is there any doubt that working together in the fields was an opportunity for young people of French and Jersey origin to get to know one another; or that the ability of French Normans or French-speaking Bretons and the local population to understand each other's dialects, made such meetings easier.

But the report is prompt to note that the new trend in immigration (not further elaborated) was for a fall in marriages with people of Jersey stock (the report's expression), and the arrival of migrants of both sexes, among them many who were already married or engaged. The result was to make them

“... more independent, more inclined to be self-sufficient, and less obliged to mix with their purely Jersey neighbours; above all since the establishment of schools run by foreign priests, who maintain foreign traditions and make it more difficult if not impossible to assimilate the children of foreigners.”

The religious question mentioned or suggested in the Report

The last citation illustrates the attitude of the authors of the report, and no doubt through them of a large part of the population. It was not just the existence of schools run by religious orders that was seen as a threat, but the fact that these schools were from the start established by foreign orders, Catholics into the bargain. From this to assuming Machiavellian intentions on their part was but a short step, and one which the committee was not far from taking.

“The arrival here of so many foreigners, and the birth on our soil of their children have attracted a large number of foreign ecclesiastics, who are distributed throughout almost all the parishes of the island, and whose very obvious aim is to exercise and defend their exclusive influence on all this population of foreign origin.”

The law of 1902 which restricted the establishment of religious orders in Jersey does not appear to have calmed all the tensions between the local churches and the imported churches. One can also detect the powerful resentment of the communities of Jesuits and oblates who had been settled in the island for several years, in the following lines:

“The establishment here of several foreign religious associations has only added to these foreign influences, which have already grown so powerful that the purely British religious organisations which once hastened the absorption of foreign immigrants now only have a comparatively weak influence as agents of assimilation.”

The paragraph under the heading 'Education' repeats with some insistence the same ideas on the presence of foreign schools, which was felt to be invasive:

“Foreign schools are found everywhere, under the direction of foreign priests, who may perhaps conform to the letter of our law, but who, maybe without wishing it, contribute materially to delay or prevent the assimilation of the children of foreigners born on our soil.”

To put it in plain language, the committee recognised that the Catholic orders were performing a great work in educating the children of immigrant workers, but there was a risk that the education provided, even though it was within the framework laid down by Jersey law - for it must not be forgotten that many of these schools had enjoyed official subsidies since the Elementary Education Act of 1872 - might be turned against the community which so generously financed it. What is not mentioned in this section, but appears in the measures proposed by the committee, is the implicit recognition of the role played by the school in the assimilation, or as we would say nowadays the integration, of children of French immigrant labourers. On the other hand, if the foreign orders took such a preponderant place in the educational institutions of the island, it was perhaps because the existing local structures were incapable of providing sufficiently for educational needs.

The practical measures recommended by the committee

After setting out the problems, some of them serious, for the present and future of Jersey raised by the arrival and presence of a large foreign community, the committee attempted to formulate some proposals.

The question of the legitimacy of this immigration had been clearly answered in the preamble: it was necessary, and therefore it was appropriate to take practical steps to make it easier for immigrants to settle in Jersey in such a way that they would become good citizens, and their children

“are brought up in such a way that there is no doubt of their loyalty to the British Empire and of the use that they will be able to make of [Jersey's] autonomy and self-government ...”

Nevertheless it should be emphasised that the problems of immigration concerned two distinct realities, both in their implications and in their treatment.

First of all, one must consider the seasonal immigrants, the labourers who came for the harvest of early potatoes and hay, and who returned to France after the season. These were classic seasonal workers. On the other hand there were those who sought permanent employment and came to settle in Jersey indefinitely or even definitively.

These two forms of immigration were complementary and even necessary for the needs of Jersey's agriculture. Consequently the report judged them to be worthy of encouragement, as long as they did not exceed the needs of the island.

Two series of measure were proposed, with the aim of improving the conditions and consequences of immigration for migrants and the host country: the first series, 'upstream' as it were, that is before the arrival of the foreigners, and the second series 'downstream', that is once the French were settled in Jersey and wished to integrate themselves into island society.

Measures aimed to control the arrival of migrants

The measures proposed to allow Jersey to control immigrants were of three kinds, and they met the fears of disturbance of public order that were felt by a large part of the population, and expressed throughout the report.

First of all, there was a need to make sure that those who came to Jersey, either for a few weeks or for good, were respectable, sober, peaceable and hard working. A kind of check on good morals had to be instituted. One cannot help thinking of the virtues that Victorian society demanded in the ideal labourer.

The committee's next recommendation, which can be seen as the direct consequence of the first, was to remove from the island all the worthless fugitives from justice, without discouraging the suitable people who were needed on Jersey's farms. This point answered the fears of those who dreaded the arrival in Jersey of a population of paupers who would live on public charity. This had been a constant source of concern to the island authorities throughout the 19th century, and several laws had been passed which sought to forbid the disembarkation of the indigent or the mentally ill.

Finally the report advised the creation of a body to find work for good workers, in the form of a labour exchange, registration bureau or other practical means. This was a plea for a centralised recruitment agency for farm labourers, but it did not make it clear if it was to be run by the professional organisations chiefly concerned with French immigration (e.g. the growers of early potatoes) or by the public authorities.

Few genuinely new or original measures to control immigration were suggested. The report in fact advised the hardening of the existing laws, a few improvements here and greater collaboration between different departments there.

Measures intended to facilitate the assimilation of permanent immigrants

The measures proposed concerned only the education and assimilation of the children of immigrants. The report's authors acknowledged that it was very difficult to remove them from the influence of their families or churches. The fault clearly lay with the island authorities, who had allowed the setting up of foreign religious associations, churches and schools run by foreign priests, without asking too many questions about their true motives. One solution envisaged was to ensure that the elementary education of every child who went to school on Jersey (and elementary education was the only schooling obligatory since the Act of 1872), was received in a school run by persons of British nationality. This meant Jersey or English people.

This was no more and no less than urging that the educational system should be taken back - or perhaps just taken? - into the hands of the elements who were regarded as reliable: that is the heads of the English or Jersey establishment, who would guarantee that their pupils learned English and were trained to respect the values and traditions of the Empire and the special characteristics of Jersey. At least, that was what the authors of the report hoped to achieve.

The results of the report of 1906

The members of the States were largely inspired by the conclusions of the committee's report when they came to draft the new legislation.

The first practical consequence were the proposal and voting of new conditions for the admission of non-British foreigners. The laws of 1909 restricted the conditions under which immigrants could enter the island; they were obliged to deposit a surety of 5 shillings on arrival, to prove their identity and good health, and were forbidden to disembark except at Gorey or St Helier. These measures can be considered the most direct and visible results of the debate of the years 1906-07 [cf. part 2, chapter 3]: they were the laws that earned the admiration of Pierre Galichet [*Le fermier de l'île de Jersey*, Bibliolèque de la Science Sociale, 1912] in 1912. After describing in detail the regulations pronounced by the States of Jersey to contain and control immigration, he concluded: 'thus regulated, temporary Breton immigration renders Jersey's agriculture a service it could not do without, it is a benefit to the country'. But the element he appreciated the most in the controls as a whole was undoubtedly the repressive aspect:

"To guarantee itself Jersey has passed legislation which the United Kingdom may envy: the right to expel foreigners is absolute, and the Royal Court may order them to leave the island when they have been found guilty of a crime which it judges sufficient to entail this penalty, whatever the nature of the offence. This prudence is not without its uses."

From the same period dates the post of Aliens Officer. This senior official in charge of the question of immigration was appointed on the recommendation of the lieutenant-governor of the island and paid by the States of Jersey. His principal task was to coordinate the activity of the various bodies (chiefly the customs and the police) that controlled foreigners arriving on Jersey soil. And if they wished to settle definitively, it was he to whom they had to apply for the main administrative formalities.

The laws relating to the arrival of foreigners were maintained after the War of 1914-18. Restrictions on the departure of French farm workers were essentially imposed by the French authorities.

Controls on foreigners coming from outside the British Isles were set up by the law of 1920, and amended in 1937, but in both cases these were no more than local applications of English laws.