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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

Ecn 31—12—59

G.O. No. 2986 Press Mis.

14-15

Dated 21—12—1859

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department, for the month of December 1859.

No. 14. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Military Department, dated 25th November 1859, No. 4192.

Reviewing a letter from the Adjutant General of the Army on the necessity of improving the communications by land and water to render Cannanúr accessible at all seasons, and calling for information on the subject. } (Vide Military Proceedings from 21st to 30th November 1859, Nos. 126 @ 129.)

No. 15. ORDER THEREON, 21st December 1859, No. 2966.

In the orders specified in the margin, the Government directed that work on the Perambadí ghât and road should be stopped, in consequence of the inability of the Chief Engineer to provide efficient superintendence for it. They were led to adopt this measure because it was clear from a previous report on the work that very great waste had occurred from the absence of honest and skilled superintendence.

4th October 1859 No. 2368.
27th " " " 2528.
Order 1st June 1859 No. 1344.

2. The Governor in Council now resolves to request the Chief Engineer to take immediate measures for providing efficient superintendence, and commencing vigorously the execution of the repair of the Perambadí ghât.

3. With respect to the water communication between Cannanúr and Mangalúr, it is observed that in his letter of the 20th June last No. 1826 the Chief Engineer reported the completion of the survey of the line for the canal from Hosadúrg to Múlki, 20 miles north of Mangalúr, and that estimates were then under preparation. Colonel Bell will now be called on to send in the estimates without delay for completing the communication to Mangalúr; and to state what amount may with advantage be spent on the work in the next official year, 1860-61. The Government are anxious that the work should be in the budget for that year and should be carried on with vigour.

Recorded on the 1st July 1859 No. 1618.

(Signed) J. D. BOURDILLON,
Secretary to Government.

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MILITARY DEPARTMENT.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following:—

Memo. from the Adjutant General of the Army, Fort Saint George, 31st October 1859, *No.* 339.

The Commander-in-Chief has the honor to submit for the information of Government the within clear and able Statement from Brigadier FitzGerald Commanding the Provinces of Malabar and Canara, representing the distress of the Native Troops and inhabitants consequent on the scarcity and famine price of Rice during the late South Western monsoon.

2. This report shews how urgent is the necessity—for completing the communication both by water and by road in the Provinces, which His Excellency has so repeatedly pressed upon attention, and this would seem to be the most effectual means of preventing a recurrence of the serious evil herein brought to notice.

From the Brigadier Commanding Malabar and Canara, Cannanore, 15th October 1859, *No.* 321; *to the Adjutant General of the Army, Fort Saint George.*

I should be guilty of a neglect of duty and of the responsibilities attached to my position as Brigadier Commanding these Provinces, if I failed, after a period of great distress, as affecting the Native Troops, their families and followers, as well as the population of the country generally in this part of Malabar, to bring the same to notice, in the hopes that means may be adopted by Government to prevent a recurrence of such a dangerous, I may say disastrous, state of things as has occurred here during the months of August and September last, not only on account of Rice, the staple article of food being at famine price, but at times not even procurable at all, I have therefore the honor to request you will have the goodness to lay this before His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief for such notice as he may deem fit.

2. It would be quite superfluous, and in fact presumptuous, in my attempting to describe the peculiar position of North Malabar as regards the means of supply of Rice, the staple and almost only cerial in use as food to any extent in the face of the able reports I am aware have at various times been made to Government, particularly from W. Robinson Esquire, late Acting Collector; suffice it to say, that during at the least 6 months of the S. W. monsoon, North Malabar is I may say entirely cut off from all communication with the Rice producing countries viz., the interior of Mysore and Mercara by No. 4 Trunk Road and the Periambaddy Ghat, and with North Canara by Sea. The former line of communication has I believe been much improved this last monsoon as regards the passage of the Ghat itself, I understand the principal obstacles to have occurred for some distance both immediately above and below the Ghat, be that as it may be, the result has been that at the periods of the greatest scarcity, little help has been received from inland, and during that time I know of many Bandies for this place being detained from the state of the roads; as to the latter, North Malabar is in a great measure dependant on Canara for Rice, North Malabar does not produce Rice sufficient for its own consumption and probably imports rather more than ½ of the cerial food consumed. The average annual value of the Rice alone imported from Mangalore is about 10 Lacks of Rupees.

3. At present the trade between the two Districts is entirely carried on of necessity by sea, the Coast Road is so intersected by rivers and backwaters, as to be entirely shut up exceptfor a small traffic by coolies—The communication by sea also is only open for the 6 fair weather months of the N. E. monsoon, and even then liable to interruption, serious danger and consequent great irregularity—The Boats employed are open, undecked and quite unequal to encounter any thing approaching bad weather, therefore if stormy weather take place earlier than usual, at the period the grain Merchants are completing their monsoon supplies in April or early in May, as was the case in May 1857, and the Hurricane on this Coast on the 28th April last, the consequences are a short supply of grain and starvation, for which at present there is no remedy, for even a Steamer of great power dare not anchor here on this Coast during the height of the monsoon, and even if she did, she could not communicate with the shore.

4. I must also state that apart from the occurrence of such contingencies as I have described, under the most favorable circumstances, Rice the staple food of the country is much dearer than it ought to or might be—There is no such thing existing among the grain Merchants as healthy competition, combination is the rule—In the best of seasons it is notorious, that the

wealthy grain merchants will not, and do not lay in the full supply they ought, because by combining together and raising the price they realize the same or a larger profit on the lesser quantity, than they would on the larger, besides saving themselves much trouble and a heavy original outlay—I do not pretend to suggest a remedy for this unsatisfactory state of things, that will rest with the Government,—but I may mention the execution of the proposed inland water communication from Cannanore to Mangalore which is now open by back water to Oosdroog about 41 miles, leaving about 45 miles more to Mangalore, already partly open here and there by back-water, and the efficient completion of the No. 4 Trunk Road and the Periambaddy Ghat, so as to be passable at all seasons—I shall not here attempt to dilate upon the advantages of the above, particularly the former, to the Districts of Malabar and Canara and the countries adjacent, to say nothing of the facilities in a Military point of view of moving Troops at any season.

5. I did not trouble His Excellency at the time with a statement of our position, as I am well aware that no means existed for relieving the immediate distress—I was obliged in a great degree to allow matters to take their course—In communication with the Commissariat Officer however I did my utmost to assist and urge all parties to bring in grain, telegraphing to the Commissioner of Mercara to use his influence to induce the Merchants to hasten off their supplies, also when the Coast was somewhat open importing some Government Rice from Mangalore—It was however to me a period of great anxiety, as there was no knowing when and how a sudden and violent ebullition of the feelings of a starving population might break out—For 2 or 3 days many Sepoys and their families were literally without food, and so of course in a greater degree were the Camp followers, the inhabitants of the town of Cannanore and the surrounding country, I know of many who came to the Bazar with money in their hands and who returned with a small quantity of Horse gram the only food they could get—Fortunately ever since I have assumed the Command of these Provinces, I have directed the issue of Rice in kind in lieu of Compensation to the extent authorized by G. O. G. 19th October 1855, No. 263; which though not sufficient for a man with a family, tended much to lessen the distress among the Troops, but I would most respectfully suggest the propriety of Government adopting measures to prevent such a risk of a disturbance among the Troops and Camp followers, and I need scarcely remark that such risk is more particularly to be avoided with a population of the character of the Mopelahs of Malabar, among whom peace, or at least the absence of violent crime against person and property, almost entirely depends upon the absence of any exciting causes, among which I may assume that of hunger and starvation to be very predominent.

6. I am happy to say that under the trying circumstances, the conduct of the Native Troops, families and followers has been most praiseworthy, and I have heard of nothing to the contrary among the population of the country.

7. To prove the facts, on which I have mentioned the above remarks, I beg to annex 3 Statements marked A B and C, the first shewing the state of the market price of the 3rd sort Rice during the months of August and September—B and C, the enhanced price of all the staple articles of food at this Station during the last 10 years, the former made out for the month of February in each year the cheapest time, and the latter for the month of July the dearest time of the year—some of the principal articles it will be observed have risen in price to the extent of from 200 to 300 per cent.

8. As connected with the above, it may not be irrelevant to mention the fact for His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief's information, that for the last 15 months from June 1858 to August 1859 inclusive, during which period I have authorized the issue of Rice in kind to the Troops in the Provinces in lieu of Compensation, as authorized by the G. O. G. above quoted, a *bonâfide* saving has accrued to Government of Rupees 24,452-7-8 or a monthly average of Rupees 1,630-0-0 as shewn by the annexed Statements marked D and E, besides which the issue of Rice in kind is much more advantageous to the Soldiers, particularly here, whereas in the present instance Rice was sometimes not procurable, and if so, from its enhanced price the man would only be able to get a very small quantity of additional food indeed for his Compensation.

ORDER, No. 4192, *25th November* 1859.

The Governor in Council considers the foregoing Report from Brigadier FitzGerald, interesting and creditable—Regretting as His Honor does the circumstances that called for it, He observes with approbation the measures adopted by the Brigadier to alleviate to the extent of his power, the distress that occurred, and which so far as concerns the issue of Rice in kind, in lieu of a money Compensation, to the Native Troops, has proved both economical and judicious.

2. But the most important point now to be taken under the consideration of Government, is, the immediate improvement of the communications by land and water, to render Cannanore accessible at all seasons, as indicated by the Commander-in-Chief:—to this end the Governor in Council directs that a short clear Statement of the present condition of the Periambady Ghaut and of the Backwater Canal between Cannanore and Mangalore,* together with Report of the measures sanctioned, and in progress for their improvement be called for through the Department of Public Works for submission to Government, with the least practicable delay, when further orders will be passed.

* *Vide Proceedings of Government No. 3537, 4th October 1859, Para. 2.*

(True Extract.)

Acting Dy. Secretary to Government.

To the Adjutant General.
" Department Public Works. With 20 spare copies
" Quarter Master General.

Exd. J. E. Cathart.

Proceedings of the Madras Government
Under date the 21st October 1859.
No. 2966.

Proceedings of the Madras Govt. from
Military Department
Reading a letter from the Adjt.
Genl. of the army on the necessity of improving
the communications by land between Bangalore
& Cannanore with a view to the speedy
transmission of troops &c. &c. &c.
for information & orders on the subject.

Ordered that the Secretary
in the Public Works Department
be directed to communicate
with the Chief Engr.
Trivandrum
Superintendence
&
Revenue Officers
of the Malabar
Collectorate
on the subject
of the above
letter.

Dr. 1st Dec. 1859 pp. 1314.

Dr. 25th Oct. 1859 pp. 2368.
27 — " — " — 2520.

Dr. 25th Oct. 1859 pp.
134–135.

16/12/59

P.M. 1859 Oct. 31st
Proc. Govt. Mad.
No. 3146.

Proceedings of the
Madras Govt. in the
Military Dept.

Dated 25th Nov.
Received 2d Dec. } 59.

Requesting a letter
from the Adjt Genl
of the Army on the ne-
cessity of improving
the communications
by land between Banga-
lore & Cannanore &c.

Dr. 1st Dec. 1859 pp. 1314.

Copy to the Surveyor
Genl. Dec. 59.

No. 2966. 21st December

16th December 1859

now resolves to Request the Ch: Engr. to take immediate measures for providing efficient superintendence, & commencing vigorously the execution of the Repair of the Pamban Shoal.

3. With respect to the water communication between Cannanore & Mangalore, it is deemed that under the 2d Head of the 20th June last No. 1826. the C. G. ordered the completion of the survey of the line for the Canal from Ulsoor Mulky 20 miles North of Darmapatam Mangalore, and that estimates were then under preparation. Col: Bell will now be called on to enclose the estimates without delay for completing the communication to Mangalore; and to state what amount can be spent on the work in the next Official Year, 1860/61. The Govt. are anxious that the work should be in the Budget for that Year & should be carried on with vigour.

Recorded in the 1st July 1859 No. 1618

To Ch: Engr: with Mily Revs: No. 2742 Dated 22nd

do — to Mily Depts.

Public Works 1855 Despatch
Govt 31st Decr

No 2766.

Board of Madras Govt
21st Decr 55.

Executive Civil Engineer
20 January 56 C.A. 1814 in
Folio 27

Chief Engineer to take
immediate measures for
providing efficient Asylum
Inundation and commencing
the execution of the repair of the
Veranda giving out to Contract
with the Shundie Jemmapatty
the tender communicated from
the Superintendent

No 14 & 15