

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 1372

Press
Mis.

135-136

Dated

9-7-1861.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
9th July 1861.*

No. 135. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 11th May 1861, No. 2,403:—

Read the following replies to the Board's Proceedings, No. 5,139, dated 6th November 1860, relative to the proposed allowance of an annual grant for the extirpation of the Prickly Pear in the several Districts of this Presidency.

From Kistna District, No. 48, dated 4th, in Cons. 11th March 1861, No. 1,516.

„ Nellore,	„ 62,	„ 13th,	„ 18th April	„ „	2,371.
„ Madras,	„ 1,	„ 4th,	„ 5th January	„ „	70.
„ North Arcot,	„ 39,	„ 11th,	„ 14th March	„ „	1,601.
„ South „	„ 199,	„ 22nd,	„ 31st Dec.	„ „	6,879.
„ Trichinopoly,	„ 172,	„ 4th,	„ 7th „	„ „	6,214.
„ Salem,	„ 36,	„ 8th,	„ 12th March	„ „	1,551.

In Cons. 1st November 1860, No. 5,586.

1. In their Order in the Revenue Department, No. 2,009, dated 31st October 1860, Government approved the Board's proposal to place a moderate annual grant at the disposal of Collectors in aid of the efforts of villagers to keep down the Prickly Pear in their respective villages, and under their instructions the opinions of the Collectors of the Districts noted in the margin have been obtained as to the arrangements to be adopted for the purpose. Their replies above recorded afford, it is believed, a sufficient indication of what is required in the other Districts also.

2. The Collectors of the Kistna District, of Madras, North Arcot, Trichinopoly and Salem, agree that an annual grant may be employed in their Districts with advantage. The Collector of Nellore deprecates any outlay of the kind proposed so long as other urgent wants remain unsatisfied; and the Collector of South Arcot would, as a general rule, leave the extirpation of the plant to time and advancing cultivation, the people in the meantime, and in peculiar cases, being assisted from the local fund, or where this should prove insufficient, by a grant from Government to be applied for exceptionally.

3. Those who are in favor of the scheme name various sums for the annual grant ranging* from 1,000 to 5,000 Rupees, and it seems to be generally agreed that a moiety of the expense in clearing villages and towns with their suburbs, tank bunds, channel banks, and public thoroughfares, should be borne by the communities benefiting by the operation, and that the selection of the sites should be made by the Collector on the reports of the Tahsildárs, through whom the villagers or inhabitants in need of assistance will be required to apply. As suggested by the Collector of South Arcot, the best time for receiving the Tahsildárs' reports and apportioning the grant would generally be at the Jamabandi.

4. The reports are for the most part silent as to the agency to be employed on the work. The Collector of Salem proposes that a gang of coolies under proper superintendence should be organized at different places every year during the dry months. The Board, however, prefer Mr. Cunliffe's suggestion that the work should be given on contract to the Monigars who should receive half the estimated cost in advance, and the remainder when the site selected has been declared free after inspection by an Officer of the Department Public Works, or by a competent Revenue Officer.

5. The Collectors of the Kistna and North Arcot Districts propose extending the experiment to waste lands covered with the plant by giving them out on Kauls.

6. As observed by the Board, in their former Proceedings, No. 4,701, dated 13th October 1860, a complete and permanent extinction of the plant cannot be expected without a legislative enactment making its introduction penal; but it cannot be doubted that much benefit will result from the measures proposed.

	RS.
* North Arcot	1,000
Madras	1,000
Kistna District	2,000
Trichinopoly	4,000 + 1,000
special for Town of Trichinopoly.	

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
9th July 1861.*

7. The Board would recommend that Collectors be authorized to expend a sum not exceeding Rupees 2,000 per annum on this work, on the understanding that Government will bear more than half the expense in any case. Land occupied by the plant may be given on a four years' lease, the first year free and the assessment to be brought up by one-fourth in each succeeding year, so that in the fifth year the full assessment should be paid.

(A True Extract)

(Signed) W. HUDLINGTON, Secretary.

No. 136.

ORDER IN COUNCIL, 10th July 1861, No. 1,572.

1. With their Proceedings, dated 10th October 1860, No. 4,791, the Board of Revenue, in a letter from the Collector of Coimbatore and the Collector of Ponnai, on the subject of Prickly Pear Plant, The Government approved of the Board's suggestion that the Government should place a moderate annual grant at the disposal of Collectors to aid the efforts of the villagers to keep down the plant in their respective villages.

2. The Board of Revenue now report the arrangements which, in communication with some of the Collectors, they recommended with a view to the extirpation of the Prickly Pear as contemplated by Government in their Order above cited. They recommended that authority be given to Collectors to expend a sum not exceeding Rupees 2,000 per annum, on the understanding that Government is not to bear more than half the expense in any case.

3. The principle of the Board's suggestion has already been approved, but the Government think that 1,000 Rupees for each District will suffice for the present, until the workings of the experiment is seen. The removal of this pernicious plant is strictly a municipal affair, and, as such, the grants given in aid thereof fall under paragraph 3 of the Order of Government, dated 20th June 1859, No. 813. His Excellency the Governor in Council, therefore, authorizes the several Collectors to disburse from the local funds of their respective Districts such contributions as may be necessary for the removal of the Prickly Pear, but the aggregate of those contributions in any District is not to exceed 1,000 Rupees per annum, and in no case are the grants to exceed such sums as may be raised by private subscriptions. The expenditure should further be limited to spots where the growth of the plant is a public nuisance, and an engagement should be taken from the community benefiting by the curfew, to prevent the re-growth of the plant on the cleared sites.

4. The result of this experiment will be specially noted in the local fund report of each District.

(Signed) J. D. SIMS.

Secretary to the Government.

IN CON. 7TH DECEMBER 1860, No. 6,394.

From A. R. McDONELL, Esq., Officiating Collector of TRICHINOPOLY,
dated 4th December 1860, No. 172.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the Board's Proceedings, dated the 6th instant, No. 5,139, calling for my opinion regarding the proposal to place a moderate sum annually at my disposal, to be expended in gradually destroying the prickly-pear plant, which in parts of this district is found in great profusion.

2. Any attempt to eradicate the plant in this district, unless heavy penalties could be enforced, in the case of parties propagating the plant, must fail; any gap in a hedge is now stopped up by a piece of this plant, it then and there takes root and spreads rapidly.

3. In the immediate vicinity of the fort, and round the suburbs of this large town, this plant is to be found in great luxuriance, large clumps of it quite impenetrable, and its removal would cost a great deal, as every man employed expects a higher rate of pay than is usually given to a labourer; the work is hard and very disagreeable.

4. I would propose an annual grant of 1,000 Rupees for the town of Trichinopoly, to be expended under the orders and direct supervision of a Covenanted European Officer, and that whenever a party is found propagating the plant in any way, such as making a fence, &c., he may be fined for committing a public nuisance under the provisions of Section II Act XXI of 1840.

5. In the immediate neighbourhood of the fort, convict labor might be made available when the prisoners are not required elsewhere.

6. I would further solicit sanction for 4,000 Rupees for the remainder of the district, to be expended annually in those localities where the plant most abounds, the selection of villages being left to the discretion of the Collector, the head people of the village so selected, binding themselves to pay half the expense of removing the plant.

7. The plant when entirely rooted out, should be heaped and allowed to dry for fifteen days, and then be burnt—in this manner it could be gradually extirpated.

8. Around the fort and suburbs of this town, there is a vast quantity of the plant, for the removal of which Government will have to bear the entire cost.

Ed. J. Tulloch.

IN CON. 31st DECEMBER 1860, No. 6,879.
From H. WOOD, Esq., Collector of SOUTH ARCOT,
dated Cuddalore, 22nd December 1860, No. 199.

I have the honor to report on Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 6th ultimo, requiring my opinion on a question mooted by the Collector of Coimbatore, and taken up by the Government, of adopting measures for the eradication in districts, where it is common, of the prickly pear.

2. Provided the Government determine on making an annual grant to Collectors with this object, I see no way in which it could be expended with greater advantage than in the manner proposed by Mr. Thomas. The Tahsildars at the Jummahbundy would report the villages in which the plant is found to be particularly luxuriant and obnoxious, would make arrangements with the villagers at as low a rate as possible for its eradication and the Collector, on a consideration of the number and urgency of their representations, would, after the annual settlement was completed, apportion the grant out as he thought proper.

3. I question, however, even with these arrangements, if an annual grant could be expended with obvious advantages. The prickly pear extends wherever there are tracts of red soil, as in Virdachellam, Kalakurchy, Villapuram, Tirunamalay and Ginjee, and to extirpate it in these will be the work of generations gradually removing it in order to cultivate. A grant would do nothing here.

4. In the immediate vicinity of villages, the villagers already destroy it when they find it pernicious and, except in cases where it is manifest, they cannot cope with its luxuriance—they are not entitled to aid in their efforts from Government.

5. I would leave its extirpation as a general rule to time and advancing cultivation. I am disposed to think that by and bye it may be found advantageous to rot it in pits with quicklime for manure and it will then soon disappear.

6. In peculiar cases I would assist the people from the local fund. In cases where these means were not sufficient, the Government might be applied to exceptionally for a grant.

Ed. J. Tulloch.

Letter from the
Collector of Coimbatore
to the Board of Revenue
dated 11th Decr 1860.
Regarding the prickly pear
in the vicinity of
villages.

12/31/60

Extract from the
Board of Revenue
to the Collector of Coimbatore
dated 11th Decr 1860.

IN CONS. 5TH JANUARY 1861, No. 70.
From B. CUNLIFFE, Esq., Collector of MADRAS,
dated Karanguli, 4th January 1861, No. 1.

I am glad to find from the Board's Proceedings of the 6th ultimo, No. 5,139, that they have taken up the subject of extirpating, if possible, the several species of Cacti, the growth of which has become such a general and serious evil. Coimbatore and Salem, of the districts I have seen, appeared to me the most overrun with the plant, but in all, I believe, that it prevails to a very pernicious extent.

2. It is, I have heard, of comparatively late importation into this country, and indeed I have been told that Dr. Anderson, of the Medical Service, introduced it towards the close of the last century, and this rumour is in some degree supported by a species of Cactus being represented on his statue in our Cathedral. If such introduction be a fact, it is curious to think that what was intended as a valuable addition to the local flora should have turned out so detrimental.

3. The cochineal insect feeds on a certain variety of Cactus, and if we possess this here it might be as well to introduce the former, as we might thereby obtain some advantage from a shrub which is now worse than useless.

4. It seems indestructible by any other means than that of rooting it out and burying it three or four feet below the surface, and the trouble of doing this may be the cause of the people rarely attempting to stay its progress.

5. Affording a dense covering and an unassailable shelter, it is the resort of snakes and ground vermin, and has certainly become one of the greatest pests in this country.

6. I think that the Board have proposed the most practicable plan of keeping down the evil, if not of removing it in districts such as this one, in which its presence is fortunately less felt, and I would recommend that 200 Rupees annually be granted to each Taluq for the purpose of attempting to eradicate the plant, commencing in the localities most annoyed by it, and after sanction obtained from the Collector.

7. That much may be done by perseveringly removing it is shown by Mr. Dowdeswell's success in clearing, with the help of prisoners, the environs of Chingleput which had been overrun with the plant during the incumbency of his predecessor.

8. Tank bunds, road sides and the immediate vicinity of the village should first be attended to, and more would be performed by the Monigars undertaking the contract, receiving half the estimated cost, and the remainder when the ground had been declared free after inspection by an officer of the Department of Public Works, or by any of the higher Revenue authorities. We should have an hold on the contractor, and if no result could be shown should not lose the money advanced.

9. The aloe, as the Government remark, is a better substitute, makes an equally good fence, besides yielding a valuable fibre.

Exd. J. Tulloch.

IN CONS. 11TH MARCH 1861, No. 1,516.

From G. THORNHILL, Esq., Acting Collector of the KISTNA DISTRICT,
dated Masulipatam, 4th March 1861, No. 48.

1. With reference to the Board's Proceedings, dated 6th November 1860, No. 5,139, I have the honor to state that with a view to obtaining some idea of the extent of prickly pear, and the probable cost of clearing it, I called for rough estimates from certain Taluqs, and the non-receipt of these has caused the delay in replying to the Board's Proceedings.
2. I have now received accounts from four Taluqs, and the estimates for clearing the prickly pear in them amounts to Rupees 46,000. It is in less profusion in some other parts of the district, but is found in greater or less quantities everywhere.
3. The Town and Cantonment of Masulipatam are much overrun by it, and although efforts have been made at different times to eradicate it, they have failed, from the difficulty of finding any efficient substitute for it as a fence in the sandy soil in which Masulipatam is situated. Aloes are not procurable in large quantities and require protection while growing.
4. If a small annual sum were placed at the disposal of Collectors, to assist villagers where the plant is most abundant, I think there would be but little trouble in removing it from towns and villages; the chief difficulty would be to prevent its re-appearing, and this, I think, can only be done by a legislative enactment making it penal for any individual to permit the growth of it on his own ground, and for village communities to permit the existence of it on sites once cleared.
5. In some places, however, miles of waste land are thickly covered with it. This land is often not worth cultivating, and certainly is not worth clearing, as in the case of the sandy tracts in parts of Guntur, and I do not see how it can be eradicated or, if once removed, how it can be kept down in places like this. The only plan will be to offer Ryots inducements to take up the land and clear it either by the grant of progressive Cowles or of pecuniary assistance or of both; and when once cleared, to bring it within the provisions of enactment as above suggested.
6. An annual sum of 2,000 Rupees would, I think, go a long way towards effecting a clearance of it, in a few years; but to prevent its re-appearance, I can see no alternative but a penal enactment empowering Magistrates to impose fines, leviable by distraint, on individuals allowing the plant to re-appear where once cleared or planting it afresh in their own grounds, and also empowering them to impose rates on village communities, who allow it to grow on unoccupied and public sites, within the limits of their villages. The fines should of course be expended in removing the plant from the spot complained of, and any surplus should go to a fund for the eradication of it in waste lands.

Exd. J. Wright.

Handwritten notes in the left margin, mostly illegible.

Handwritten signature and date: 12/3/61.

Handwritten notes in the right margin, mostly illegible.

1861

In Cons. 12TH MARCH 1861, No. 1,551.
From H. A. BRETT, Esq., Collector of SALEM,
dated Monganoor, 8th March 1861, No. 36.

With reference to the Board's Proceedings of the 6th November last, No. 5,139, communicating the copy of a correspondence between the Board and the Government relative to the best measures to be adopted for the extirpation of the prickly pear, and requesting the opinions of the Collectors therein named as to the detailed arrangements to be adopted, I have the honor to state that prickly pear grows all over this district, but more particularly in the taluqs of Trichengode, Keshungheri, Utengeri, Usur and Salem.

2. The best means that I can suggest for remedying the evil is to employ a gang of coolies, under proper superintendence, in rooting out the plant at different places every year during the dry months. If the Government sanction an annual grant as recommended by the Board, I will in communication with the District Engineer make the necessary arrangements, and will report the result to the Board after a fair trial.

3. In the case of all irrigation works, the Ryots ought, I think, to pay at least half the expense necessary to clear away the growth of past years, and afterwards to be held responsible, through their monigars, that the plant is not allowed to spread again.

Exd. J. Tulloch.

IN CONS. 14TH MARCH 1861, No. 1,601.

From J. D. ROBINSON, Esq., Acting Collector of NORTH ARCOT,
dated Chittoor, 11th March 1861, No. 39.

In reply to their Proceedings of the 6th November 1860, No. 5,139, I have the honor to state for the information of the Board that I have conferred with many intelligent ryots, and several of my more experienced revenue officers, on the subject of eradicating the prickly-pear therein discussed. There is, as might be expected, considerable variety of opinion on the point; but from all that passed, it seemed to be generally admitted that the ryots could not reasonably look to Government for assistance, in cases where the plant has to be extirpated from hedge rows and private premises and holdings. With respect to public thoroughfares, village common, tank bunds, banks of channels, and the suburbs of towns and villages, the most economical proposition made was, that the inhabitants should contribute in the shape of gratuitous labor, two-thirds of the cost of removal; but the majority evidently thought, whatever they may have said, that Government should bear a full moiety of the expense. Some of the Tahsildars have sent in returns of the extent of ground covered with prickly-pear in their respective charges, but such estimates are purely conjectural and are of no further value than as indicating generally the greater or less prevalence of the evil in different parts of the district. The suburbs of some of our larger towns are much over-run with this noxious plant, and under the covert which it affords become the depôts for all the ordure and filth of the place. It is to such cases that our attention should first be directed, as there can be no question that the free current of air is much impeded by prickly-pear, and its presence in any quantity must be directly and indirectly detrimental to health.

2. The work of extirpation will be very gradual, and probably be only taken up at the more leisurely seasons of the year; but if Government will place at my disposal a small sum annually, say Rupees 500, or Rupees 1,000 for the purpose, I make no doubt that in the course of a few years much substantial good might be effected. In conclusion, I would beg to suggest whether in the case of Porumboke over-grown with prickly-pear, it would not be advisable still further to encourage its extirpation by granting Kauls, making it free for the first year and charging half and full assessment for the 2nd and 3rd years respectively.

3. Indeed, I should have been disposed to advocate quinquennial kauls with more gradual instalments did I not, looking to the present value of land and the active competition everywhere observable, think that the shorter period might, except in very bad cases, suffice for the attainment of the object in view.

Exd, J. Tulloch,

11th Nov 1861
To the Hon. Secy to the Govt
of Madras
From the Hon. Secy to the
Govt of Madras
Subject: Prickly-pear
Reference to your letter of the
11th Nov 1861 is hereby
acknowledged.

1237/61

11th Nov 1861
To the Hon. Secy to the Govt
of Madras
From the Hon. Secy to the
Govt of Madras
Subject: Prickly-pear
Reference to your letter of the
11th Nov 1861 is hereby
acknowledged.

11th Nov 1861

IN CONS. 18TH APRIL 1861, No. 2,371.
From J. W. B. DYKES, Esq., Collector of NELLORE,
dated Krishnapatnam, 13th April 1861, No. 62.

With reference to your Memorandum, dated the 16th February, requesting a reply to your Proceedings, dated the 6th November 1860, calling for my opinion as to the advisability of allowing an annual grant for the extirpation of prickly-pear, I have the honor to state that in my opinion the course recommended by the Board would be very advisable, if the money were not more urgently required for other purposes. As it is, however, when the whole country is stagnating for want of anything like suitable provision for traffic, I would strongly deprecate the outlay of a Rupee in the removal of prickly-pear.

No 1372

Proceedings of the Madras Government
Under date the 9th July 1861.

Read the following Progs.
of the Board of Revenue.

Reporting on the allowance
of an annual grant for the
extirpation of the Pichy Pear
in the several Districts of this
Presidency, and recommending
that Collectors be authorized
to expend not more than
2000 Rs per annum on this work

(Here enter N^o of Progs. N^o 2403)

With these Progs
of 13th October 1860 N^o 4704
the Board submitted
letters from the Coll^r
of Coimbatore and the
Conservator of Forests
on the subject of mea-
sures to be adopted for
the

Co 1257/61

Y^{rs}

the extirpation of the
Pricely ^{plant} Bar. The Gov^t
approves of the Board's
proposal to place a
moderate annual grant
at the disposal of the
to aid the efforts of the
villagers to keep down
the plant in their respec-
-tive villages.

2 The Board of Re-
-venue now report the
arrangements which in
communication with some
of the Collectors, they re-
-commends with a view
to the extirpation of the
Pricely Bar as contin-
-plates by Gov^t in their
order ^{above mentioned} of 31st October 1859
~~27th 1859~~. They recommend
that authority be given
to Collectors to spend a
sum

sum not exceeding Rs 2000
per annum on the under-
-standing that Gov^t is
not to bear more than
half the expense in any
case.

3 The principle of
the Board's suggestion
has already been approved
but the Gov^t think that
1000 Rs for each District
will suffice for the pre-
-sent - until the working
of the experiment is seen.
The removal of this
pernicious plant is
strictly a municipal
affair and, as such, the
grants given in aid
thereof fall under para 3
of the order of Gov^t of 20th
June 1859 No 823. This
Excellency the Governor
in

in Council therefore
authorizes the several
Collectors to disburse from
the local funds of their
respective Districts such
contributions as may
be necessary for the
removal of the Prickly
Pear but the aggregate
of these contributions
in any district is not
to exceed 1000 Rs per
annum and in no case
are the grants to exceed
such sums as may be
raised by private sub-
scriptions. The expendi-
-ture should further
be limited to spots
where the growth of
the plant is a public
nuisance and an engage-
-ment should be taken
from

from the community be-
-nefitting by the outlay,
to prevent the regrowth
of the plant on the clear-
ed sites.

4 The result of this
experiment will be spe-
-cially noticed in the
Local Fund report
of each District.

J. D. S.

14 Copies

To

18- " The Board of Revenue
Chief Engineer

It may be presumed
perhaps, whether,
without a formal
enactment, much
effect will follow
this measure. I should
apprehend that

Collection of the Turkey
Bar in the Local Districts

1871-1872

31-10-

Revenue 1861 Departt.
Pro. of Govt for Aug.

1872

Pro. of the Local Districts
Aug 1861

1871 - 1872

To Authorizing Collectors
to disburse from the local
funds of their respective
Districts such contributions
as may be necessary not
exceeding Rs 10 annually
for the collection of the
Turkey Bar Fund.

1871-1872