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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 41	Press / ~~Mis.~~
Dated 21—1—1862.	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
21*st January* 1862.

No. 78. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Public Department, dated 6th January 1862, No. 7:—

Referring for consideration the subject of opening a line of communication in certain hill tracts in Ganjam. } (Vide Public Proceedings, 6th January 1862, Nos. 11-12.)

No. 79. ORDER THEREON, 21st January 1862, No. 41.

Communicated to the Deputy Chief Engineer Northern Circle, who will instruct the District Engineer, in communication with the Collector, to furnish a rough estimate of the probable cost of clearing a trace such as Mr. Forbes recommends in paragraph 8 of his letter. The estimate should be accompanied by a sketch of the country, and should show what portion of the cost would be chargeable against the Zamíndári. On receipt of this, the views of the Court of Wards will be ascertained through the Revenue Department.

(Signed) W. H. HORSLEY, Lieut.-Colonel,
Chief Engr. and Secy. to Govt., D.P.W.

P.-14. 16 3D

PUBLIC DEPARTMENT.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following letter from G. S. FORBES, Esq., Collector and Agent in Ganjam; to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Parlakimidi, 7th December 1861, No. 327.

Para. 1. With reference to the enquiries instituted by Government some time since through the Medical Department regarding hill ranges suitable for sanataria, I have the honor to report for the information of His Excellency the Governor in Council, the result of two excursions undertaken by myself and other gentlemen in the district to the summit of the Mahendragiri mountain which is distant about 20 miles from the Sea coast, North latitude 18-57, longitude East 84-24.

2. The first ascent was undertaken on the 9th October from the eastern side of the mountain by Messrs. Minchin, Hooper and myself; the approach is by a somewhat circuitous path which winds for several miles between the lower spurs of the range, then follow about six miles of very easy and gradual ascent until the path faces the steep side of the higher portion of the mountain, from this point to the summit a distance of perhaps 1½ or 2 miles the way is extremely toilsome. After surmounting this difficulty we found ourselves on a saddle of about 4 miles in length at an altitude ranging from 4,000 to 4,900 feet, varying in width and slope and in parts narrow, but affording ample ground for numerous houses and gardens.

3. The surface is covered with grass for a considerable space with here and there small woods, in which are to be found the wild raspberry and violet and the ferns and orchids common to the hill ranges of the Peninsula. In parts however the saddle is bare and rocky, springs of pure water are to be found in several places. During our first visit which was in October the Thermometer ranged from 58 to 73 and on the second occasion in November from 45 to 61.

4. On the very highest point of the hill is a small stone pagoda formed of stones of such bulk that the mode of its construction is not easy to be conjectured. The height of the building, which is four-sided, may be about 52 feet; the basement occupies an area of about 13 feet square and is formed of four blocks of stone of about 10 feet in length by 3 feet in breadth and of the same thickness, three layers each consisting of four blocks surmount the basement and on the top of them is laid a single block 8 feet square by 4 feet thick finished by a circular stone carved like a coronet and of about 5 feet in diameter.

5. The entrance barely admits a man, and in the interior is the stone symbol held sacred by the Lingayets; close by this pagoda is a station of the Trigonometrical Survey, and from this point the coast may be traced from Ganjam on the north, to Calingapatam on the south. The view to south-west ranges over the greater part of Parlakimidi; behind the range or rather on its western side runs a deep valley, on the opposite side of which rise the numerous and extensive hill ranges occupied by the independent Sourah tribes; some of these hills are but little inferior in height to the Mahendragiri. To the north and north-east are distinctly traceable the Jarada, Jalantra, Bodarsingee, Soorungee and Chikati Hill Zemindaries and the talooks of Itchapore, Moherry and part of Poobaconda. The Mundasa Zemindary extends from the east face of range to the sea shore. Besides the small pagoda already described on the summit of the mountain, there are two others rather lower down of more elaborate carving and greater size, they differ in outline but both are of forms common in Orissa; three or four other similar structures are to be found in the neighbouring woods in various stages of ruin. Messrs. Hooper, Lane and myself discovered during our second ascent which was made with a view to ascertain the capabilities of an approach from the western valley, the remains of an inscription in the Tamul character but we had not the leisure or the means to pursue our examination so far as to decipher complete words. There are also inscriptions in Oriya and Teloogoo and some other character resembling the Mahratta. The Natives can give no distinct account of these buildings, but one tradition ascribes them to the "Pandevas" perhaps identical with the Pandian brothers who formed the dynasty of that name in the south.

6. We found the ascent from the long valley on the western side of the hill comparatively easy and capable of being rendered more so at a trifling outlay in clearing jungle. If further exploration appears to the Government desirable on public grounds, I would undertake to have this done by the Sourahs if five hundred Rupees are placed at my disposal; it will be desirable among other things to ascertain the state of the springs in the hot weather and the salubrity of the climate at that season.

7. We observed numerous and extensive valleys of fertile soil suitable for the growth of Coffee and a plateau where the cinchona tree would probably thrive.

8. As the valley which divides the Mahendragiri range from the hill tracts of the independent Sourahs to the west extends from the Jarada Zemindary completely into the Parlakimidi country, a line of communication along this part of the Sourah border might be very easily secured by clearing a wide road trace along the western side of the valley for the entire distance; for Military purposes, and more especially for Police patrol such a line would be of some value. If therefore the Government approve such an undertaking, the Court of Wards would I am persuaded co-operate on behalf of the estate in the undertaking by supplying funds for that portion of the trace which is in the Kimidi limits, and which comprises in fact the larger portion of the line.

ORDER THEREON, 6th January 1862, No. 7.

Referred to the Department of Public Works where the subject of the concluding paragraph will receive consideration.

2. The Government do not deem it advisable for the present to incur any expense in clearing the road up the hill.

Paragraph 6.

(True Extract.)

Chief Secretary.

To the Department Public Works.
„ Collector and Agent in Ganjam.

Exd. F. Cartledge.

Pub: Works 1862 Depar
Pro: of Govt for January
№ 14

Pro: of the Madras Govt
in the Pub: Depar:

Dd 6th January 62.

From the Deputy Chief Engr
Dd 11th March 1862
Cer: 718. in Pro:
№ 644 - 9 8th April.

Cer: 78 & 79.

C15th January 1862

Referring for
consideration the subject of opening a line
of communication
in certain hill-tracts
in Ganjam -

№ 41 - 21st January.

With an order

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13 Copies
To Dy Chief
Engrs & Chief Engr
Pub dept
Rev do
pro P. Dept

Fort St George
21st January 1862

Ed 6/2