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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 355-21 Press Mis. 55-86

Dated 5- 11- 1886.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department, 5th November 1866.

No. 85. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Revenue Department :—

Sanctioning with remarks a sum of Rupees 11,000 for Famine Works in the Dindigul Táluq, Madura District. } (Here enter 29th October 1866, No. 2,924.)

No. 86. ORDER THEREON, 5th November 1866, No. 3,521.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 20.

Forwarded to the Superintending Engineer of the 8th Division, whose particular attention will be called to the Proceedings of Government No. 3,198, dated 8th October 1866, and to the Orders communicated therewith.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) CHARLES A. ORR, Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

To the Superintending Engineer, 8th Division.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

No. 661. Read the following letter from the Collector of Madura, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Dindigul, 9th October 1866, No. 1,707 :—

1. Referring to my letter No. 1,622, dated 28th September last, I have the honor to report that since the 25th September rain has fallen over the whole of the Dindigul Talook, quite sufficient for dry crops, and many tanks have received a good supply of water. Under them wet cultivation is going on, but several tanks are still empty.

2. The crops are everywhere looking well, but they are very backward. The markets are well supplied, and prices are somewhat lower, and the general health is good, but the poorer classes are still in difficulty, and must have suffered greatly. Judging from what I have heard, and from what is to be seen not an aloe bush in the Talook but has had its heart cut out to be boiled and eaten, and it seems that the eating of such food was attended with very painful dysentery. The women and children are still to be seen in troops wandering over the fields, picking up a small kind of wild spinach, which they boil and eat. At all times the very poor used to gather that vegetable, but the number now so occupied is remarkable.

3. The great distress was from the beginning to about the 24th of September, and was caused by the holding off of the rain for about two months up to that time, and by the importation of grain from the Cumbum valley having suddenly ceased. At the same time very great alarm of plunderers spread through the towns and villages, for the lower classes, owing to want, took to plundering, at night, sheepfolds and houses in which they supposed grain was to be found. About the middle of September, the Superintendent of Police visited the Talook and strengthened the Police force. Several of the plunderers were punished, and confidence thus restored. At the same time the merchants exerted themselves to bring grain to the markets. On the 25th the rain came down, and at once the whole aspect of affairs changed.

4. There has been no plundering of markets or of grain carts in this Talook or in any part of the District. The least sign of anything of the sort being about to occur was at once put down by the activity of the Sub-Magistrates and Police in a very praiseworthy way, and I consider that in that matter, on all occasions, they have done their duty very well; and Government may judge of what the difficulty was generally when, for a short time in September, rice was two and a half measures the Rupee, and not even procurable at some of the best places of production.

5. But the people of Dindigul are far from being out of their difficulties, and it is not probable that prices will fall considerably for several months to come, even if there is a good north-east monsoon. The wet and dry crops have been below the average for the last two years. The cultivation of cholum in gardens, upon which grain the people of this Talook chiefly subsist, has notably failed this year. Owing to want of water in wells, many gardens were not cultivated; in some that were cultivated the crops failed, owing to the wells running dry, and the cultivation under the best of the wells had to be contracted to suit the deficient

supply of water in the wells. To add to the difficulty, the cholum crops which were sown in the dry lands, and which should be coming on now, and should be nearly ready for harvesting, totally withered, owing to the want of rain in August and the beginning of September. The rain that has fallen since has enabled the Ryots to re-sow the lands on which the crops withered, and to extend their cultivation to the lands previously left uncultivated, and which were to have been cultivated by the rains now falling and still expected, but this operation is not being carried on as expeditiously as it should, owing to the weakness of the ploughing cattle to the extra labor they have been put to, and time occupied in re-ploughing the lands on which the crops had already failed.

6. The valuable cholum crops having been lost, and the time for sowing that description of grain in this Talook having passed, the lands have been now sown with inferior sorts of dry grain, and very extensively with different sorts of gram and beans, which latter sorts of produce cannot be extensively used as food. They will have to be bartered away for dry grain, which will have to be imported, and the crops now on the ground, and about to be sown, cannot be harvested before February next. For the above reasons, it seems possible that the grain which usually forms the chief food of the people cannot be for some time to come as abundant or cheap as is desirable, and therefore the means of obtaining employment and earning wages on remunerative public works should be offered.

7. I have therefore, under the sanction of Government, conveyed in their Order dated 27th September last, placed at the disposal of the Range Officer from Imperial Funds—

For the Dindigul and Nattam road, an important salt road...	Rs.	1,000
Dindigul and Palany, a continuation of the same road... ...	,,	1,000
For the Trichinopoly road, the chief road by which grain is brought into the Talook...	,,	1,000
Total Rupees ...		3,000

I have satisfied myself, by personal inspection with the Range Officer, of the necessity of the repairs we determined to undertake on those roads, and the work consists chiefly of that sort which will afford employment to women, boys, and girls.

8. Many of the large tanks in the Talook are in bad repair. I have selected nine,* which are situated in parts of the Talook distant from Dindigul, and far from each other, and have directed the Talook Overseer to make estimates for their repair, which he is now doing. As I get the estimates, I will have the work undertaken at once by the Revenue officials.

* *Villages.*

1. Goovanooth.
2. Vedasundur.
3. Moolipaudy.
4. Koolathoor.
5. Padyoor.
6. Koomboor.
7. Vemboor.
8. Pilat.
9. Tennumpetty.

9. The estimates for repairing the above tanks may amount to 7,000 Rupees, and the work will afford employment to the laboring classes generally over the

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
29th October 1866.

Talook, and keep them in their villages, and the work will be measured as completed from time to time by the Public Works Department officials.

10. The laboring classes in the Talook are not as numerous comparatively as in the other Talooks, and so it cannot be expected that the proposed works will be got through very expeditiously, and as the rainy season is coming on, it is possible the tanks will receive water, which will stop working in them in that case, and if it still continues desirable to continue to give employment on public works, the above funds might be diverted to further expenditure on the roads above-mentioned, and to the making of the Railway feeder to Caroor.

11. There is a very well conducted Relief House at Dindigul, where indigent persons are fed at a cost of 15 Rupees a day from contributions raised in the Talook, and from funds sent me by the Secretary to the Famine Relief Committee. I did not observe at it many cripples and very old people, but an extraordinary number of children. I have urged the Tahsildar and Native Committee to be strict in only giving food to persons who cannot get food any other way. As labor is afforded, I hope to reduce the expenditure at the Poor House, but it is probable 10 Rupees a day at least will be required for the next three months. As I find relief is required, I will apply to the Secretary to the Famine Relief Committee.

12. At Vedasundur there is another Poor House, where the expenditure is 3 Rupees a day, and the Sub-Magistrate at that station looks after it. It is hoped that the necessity for keeping it open at that small place will not continue much longer.

13. The above is the extraordinary expenditure I have incurred, and for which, trusting the same will meet the approval of Government, I beg sanction may be granted.

14. Besides the above and the already sanctioned expenditure of Imperial and Local Funds, I have further given the Tahsildar 750 Rupees out of Local Funds to expend on repairing local roads, and 1,000 Rupees from the Jungle Conservancy Fund to dig good sized pits along seventeen miles of the Madura, and fourteen miles along the Palany road, to plant avenue trees, which will give a good deal of employment.

15. Besides the public expenditure, there is a large amount of expenditure made daily by the Jesuit Mission in building a large church in Dindigul, and by Mr. Yorke on his bungalow and institution. If Government approve of and sanction the above expenditure, and if we only get a good monsoon, the Talook will be in as favorable a position as possible.

16. I am about making a tour through the Palany and the northern part of this Talook, and if I observe anything deserving the immediate notice of Government, will report the same.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
29th October 1866.

No. 662. ORDER THEREON, 29th October 1866, No. 2,924.

Miscellaneous.

1. Communicated to the Board of Revenue and Famine Relief Committee.

2. The Government sanction the proposed expenditure of Rupees 11,000, and will place further funds, if necessary, at the disposal of the Collector for the employment of the able-bodied poor.

3. The Government are glad to learn that the Sub-Magistracy and Police have so well done their duty.

(True Extract.)

Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
„ the Relief Committee.
„ the Department Public Works.
„ the Judicial Department.
„ the Collector of Madura.
„ the Accountant General.

P. W. 1866 Dept.

Pro. of Govt. for Nov.

No 4 to 34

Rec. of the Madras Govt

in the Revenue Dept.

Dt 29 Oct.

Rec'd 1 Nov. 1866

No 2924

Sanctioning, with remarks, a further sum of Rs. 11,000 for Famine Works in the Dindigul Taluq, Madura Dist.

No 85. 85.

C/ 3521 - 5 3/4 Nov. 1866