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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public works **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 709-710 Press
239 240 Mis.

Dated 9 3 1871.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department, 9th March 1871.

No. 239. Read the following letter from J. OUCHTERLONY, Esq., to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated London, 25th January 1871 :—

I HAVE the honour to request that you will be so good as to bring the following circumstances under the consideration of the Right Honourable the Governor in Council. They relate to my position as an extensive cultivator of coffee in South-east Wynaad, and the injurious effect upon this of the existing imperfect condition of the public high road that passes from the Mysore country by the Carcoor Ghaut to Calicut and Beypore on the Western Coast.

2. I may be permitted, at the outset, to observe that it is 25 years since I first commenced coffee planting in the valley which now bears my name; that this partook, at the time, of the character of an experiment, the success of which was uncertain; and that the difficulties and impediments which had to be overcome were of every description that could beset an enterprise of the kind. Labour for purposes of cultivation had all to be imported from distant villages in the Mysore country, and this in the face of much prejudice against an unknown and untried spot. Food for the sustenance of labourers had equally to be imported, there being no supply on the spot. The only (nominal) village within reach, Goodaloor, consisted of a handful of miserable huts, and the locality was so feverish that an official notice, in a rude resting place for travellers, warned every one of the risk to life that attended passing a single night under its roof. No facilities whatever existed for any sort of pecuniary transaction. Of police there was none; and the nearest Law Court was about 150 miles off. And, lastly, there was not a road in the neighbourhood fitted for any ordinary traffic, although professedly (according to the authorized book of roads) there was a high way down the Carcoor Ghaut to the Malabar coast.

3. In speaking of these difficulties I am not pretending to advance that I had any right to look—nor indeed have I at any time looked—to the Government for any special assistance in surmounting the earlier enumerated ones; but I recapitulate them to show that it must have been patent to the authorities that much anxiety, frequent disappointments, and a largely increased expenditure could not fail to attend upon the undertaking. Labour and food have even still to be imported from abroad. And, if Goodaloor has become now a large village, the jungle once hemming it in been removed, and the condition of fatal disease exchanged for one of comparative healthiness, I may fairly claim that this, and an improvement in certain other particulars, is almost entirely due to the development of my work in the district. One of the gravest impediments to success, however, has continued, and in a certain degree remains to the present day. I allude to the absence of any complete or fitting road for the transport of produce and stores.

4. I would beg here to be allowed to remark that I have never presumed to consider that the construction of a road to connect any private plantation with a public high road—when simply used for such an object—should not be made at the sole expense of the proprietor; and it is on this principle that I have acted in completing, through a very difficult country and at a considerable expense, a road

to connect my plantations with the Government high road that passes Goodaloor. But what I humbly submit is, that when entering this public highway, I am fairly entitled to expect that my traffic along it shall be free and clear.

5. At the commencement of my coffee planting operations in the Ouchterlony Valley, the then Engineer of the district, now Major General F. C. Cotton, proposed to carry the main road through this valley, as an improvement on the then very defective line of communication from the Neilgherry mountains, and by the Carcoor Ghaut to the coast, and he asked my assent to surrendering ground for the work—an assent which was of course readily given. The scheme was not carried out at that time, but it continued to engage attention until, under Lord Harris's Government, it took definite shape in an ordered survey and tracing. The mutinies arrested the work, but it was subsequently resumed, and, after new surveys and tracings and mature consideration of the subject, a line of route for this Government highway of communication was resolved upon, and ordered to be carried out. Planters then fondly—but as it now appears vainly—hoped that this vital difficulty would soon be at an end.

6. The earthwork, so to speak, of the new road has indeed been completed years since; but not a single stream that crosses it is yet bridged, and the road in consequence is practically useless, at least for several months of the year, as a route for transport of goods. At other times it is only made available by the make-shift expedient of annually constructing *temporary bridges* across the streams. Even this, however, seems to be carried out without a sufficient regard for the imperative requirements of the traffic.

7. I may here explain two points. The one is, that from our local position we are alike precluded from profiting by any line of railroad to reach a port of shipment for our produce, and of using any other than the short and direct line, which leads from Goodaloor to Calicut and Beypoor, to obtain an outlet by sea. The other point is, that getting his coffee down to the coast *at an early period* is a vital and indispensable necessity to the Planter. Coffee has a certain preparation to go through on the coast before it is fit for shipment; and this requires to be completed in dry, warm weather. If deferred till the dampness of the early south-west monsoon, the process of drying *cannot* be properly completed, and the bean suffers a serious depreciation in value from loss of colour. Further, as the Malabar coast is closed to shipping during the prevalence of the south-west monsoon, the opportunity of exporting coffee is liable to be lost for a whole season, while however carefully packed and stored, the value is seriously prejudiced by its being detained under the influence of a damp atmosphere.

8. That the above are no imaginary evils I know by costly experience. I have had crop detained during the monsoon on the plantations from want of means of transport; similarly detained at Beypore on the coast from want of shipping; have had to send it frequently to Bombay, Colombo, and Madras for shipment, at heavy additional cost of transit, at the great risk in the case of Bombay and Colombo, which an export in country craft entails, and in every case, where the period of the monsoon is unavoidably encroached upon, at a serious loss accruing from the reduced value of the coffee. As an illustration I may mention that in

one single instance I had to give up a sum of £1,000 for deteriorated appearance of the coffee when a prior sale had been made "for arrival."

9. The foregoing explanations will, I trust, satisfy His Lordship in Council, that it is not without reason that I ask consideration for a state of things so detrimental to interests, for which, I think, I may claim a title to a certain degree of protection. What I actually suffer, and from what cause, I beg to proceed to show.

10. The largest stream traversing the Carcoor high road is the Nellumboor river. I am given to understand that the piers of the bridge to span this were constructed two years ago, but that nothing has since been done in respect of the superstructure! I do not undervalue the remedy offered for this in the shape of a temporary bridge, such as those spoken of in paragraph 6; but the apparently unaccountable *delay* that occurs in making this one available for the season's traffic is, as explained below, a source to me of the most vexatious and serious injury. I shall speak only of the experience of the present season, 1870-71, but it only echoes that of 1869-70.

11. In November last a number of our own carts, loaded with coffee, were despatched from Goodaloor for Areacode on the Beypore river. Arrived at the Nellumboor river, their further progress was arrested *because the temporary bridge had not been made*, and there they have been *detained for about a month!* Loss of interest, exposure of produce to depreciation, feed of cattle and loss of the use of them, pay of the drivers, are, unfortunately, the *least* of the resulting loss. If the means of crossing the river had been timely provided, there might, by the middle of December, have been about 150 tons of our coffee (representing some £8,000) despatched to the coast for preparation and shipment. Carts in sufficient numbers had offered for the transport of this quantity; but when the cartmen heard of this detention at the river's bank, they one and all (very naturally) refused to carry any coffee for us, betaking themselves to another part of Wynaad; and thus not only was there lost to us the present opportunity of an early despatch of so much of our crop, but we have been deprived of this large means of transport *for the whole of the season*. It may involve a pecuniary loss to be calculated only by thousands of pounds.

12. I would now venture to express the hope that, under the circumstances I have set forth, His Lordship in Council may be pleased to deem sufficient reason to exist for sanctioning the completion of the partially formed bridge on the Nellumboor river, and for ordering that any temporary bridges on the Carcoor line may be *completed* so as to be available for traffic immediately, or soon after the close of the south-west monsoon. Should, however, any simply financial consideration interfere with this, then I humbly trust that the Government will be pleased to refer the question, with, I hope, its favourable recommendation, to his Grace the Secretary of State for India.

13. I have not adverted to the fact, but may here, in conclusion, mention that a *toll* is, and was last season, levied for the use of this incomplete Carcoor road.

Proceedings of the Madras Government Public Works Department, 9th March 1871.

No. 240 ORDER THEREON, 9th March 1871, No. 709.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 8.

ORDERED that the following letter be sent:—

(Here enter No. 710, dated 9th March 1871.)

(True Extract.)

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

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

5

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT,
FORT ST. GEORGE, *9th March* 1871.

No. 241

No. 710.

To

J. OUCHTERLONY, ESQ.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 9.

SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th January 1871, and am, in reply, to state that the Government much regret that the small assignments of money for the Public Works of this Presidency of late years have made it impossible hitherto to appropriate funds for the completion of the Nellumboor bridge, but a small grant has been made to carry on the work during the remainder of the current year and the balance will, if possible, be allotted shortly.

2. The bridge will therefore it is hoped be made ready for traffic in the course of a few months.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

Colonel, R.E.,
Secretary to Government.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

To
The Secretary to Government
Department of Public works
Fort St George

Sir,

I have the honor to request that you will be so good as bring the following circumstances under the consideration of the right Honorable the governor in Council. they relate to my position as an extensive cultivator of Coffee in South East Wynaad, and the injurious effect upon this of the existing imperfect condition of the public high road, that passes from the Wynaad country to the Canara Ghaut to Calicut and Tellicherry on the western coast.

2. I may be permitted to observe, that it is 25 years since I first commenced Coffee planting in the valley which now bears my name; that this was took at the time of the character of an experiment, the result of which was uncertain; and that the difficulties & impediments which had to be overcome were of every description that could beset an enterprise of the kind. Labour for purposes of cultivation had all to be imported from distant villages in the Wynaad country, and this in the face of much prejudice against an unknown and untried spot

spot. Food for the maintenance of labourers had equally to be imported, there being no supply on the spot. The only (nominal) village within reach, Sandakan consisted of a handful of miserable huts, and the locality was so famish that an official notice in a rude outing place for travellers warned every one of the risk to life that attended passing a single night under its roof. No facilities whatever existed for any sort of pecuniary transaction. Of Police there was none; and the nearest Law Court was about 150 miles off. And lastly, there was not a road in the neighbourhood fitted for any ordinary traffic; although (according to the unanimous Dutch reports) there was a highway down the Caroon River to the Kalabar coast.

3. In speaking of these difficulties I am not pretending to advance that I had any right to look - nor indeed have I at any time looked - to the Government for any special assistance in meeting the earlier enumerated ones; but I recapitulate them to show that it must have been patent to the authorities that much anxiety, frequent disappointments and a largely increased expenditure could not fail to attend upon the undertaking. Labour and food have even still to be imported from abroad. And if Sandakan has become now a large village, the jungle once burning it in been removed, and the condition of fatal disease exchanged for one of comparative healthiness, I may fairly claim that this, and an improvement in certain other particulars, is almost entirely due to the development of my work in the district. One of the greatest impediments to success, however, has continued and in a certain degree remains to the present day - I allude to the absence of any complete or fitting road for the transport of produce and stores.

4. I would beg here to be allowed to remark, that I have never presumed to consider, that the construction of a road to connect my private plantation with a public high road - where simply used for such an object - should not be made at the sole expence of the proprietor: and it is on this principle that I have acted in completing, though a very difficult country and at a considerable expence, a road to connect my plantations with the Government high road that skirts Sandakan Bay. But what I humbly submit is, that, when entering this public highway I am fairly entitled to expect that my traffic along it shall be free of tolls.

5. As

5. At the commencement of my Coffee planting operations in the Anaikatti-kanny valley, the then Engineer of the district, now Major General Sir C. Pasley, proposed to carry the main road through this valley as an improvement on the then very defective line of communication from the Anaikatty mountains and by the Cancor pass to the coast, and he asked my assent to commencing ground for the work - an assent to which I of course readily gave. The scheme was not carried out at that time, but it continued to engage attention, until, under Lord Harris's Government, it took definite shape in an ordered survey and tracing. The Pasley alignment directed the work; but it was subsequently examined, and, after new surveys and tracings, and mature consideration of the subject, a line of route for the Government highway of communication was resolved upon and ordered to be carried out. Various causes - poverty - but as it now appears mainly - hoped that this vital difficulty would soon be at an end.

6. The earthwork - so to speak - of the new road has indeed been completed years since; but not a single stream that crosses it is yet bridged, and the road in consequence is practically useless

- at least for several months of the year - as a route for transport of goods. At other times it is only made available by the make shift expedients of annually constructing temporary bridges across the streams. Even this however seems to be carried out without a sufficient regard for the imperative requirements of the traffic.

7. I may here explain two points. The one is, that from our local position we are alike precluded from profiting by any line of railroad to reach a port of shipment for our produce, and of using any other than the short and direct lines, which leads from Pollachee to Cochin, to obtain an outlet by sea. The other point is, that getting his Coffee down to the coast at an early period is a vital & indispensable necessity to the Planter. Coffee has a certain preparation to go through on the coast before it is fit for shipment; and this requires to be completed in dry, warm weather. If delayed till the dampness of the early South West monsoon, the process of drying cannot be properly completed, and the bean suffers a serious depreciation in value from loss of colour. Further, as the Malabar coast is closed to shipping during the prevalence of the S. W. monsoon, the opportunity of exporting Coffee is liable to be lost

lost for a whole season, while, however carefully packed & stored, the value is seriously prejudiced by it being detained under the influence of a damp atmosphere.

8. That the above are no imaginary evils I know by costly experience. I have had Coffee detained during the monsoon on the plantations from want of means of transport - similarly detained at Beypoor on the coast from want of shipping - have had to send it frequently to Bombay, Colombo, & Madras for shipment, at heavy additional cost of transit, at the great risk in the case of Bombay & Colombo which are apt in country craft in details - and, in every case, where the period of the monsoon is unavoidably encroached upon, at serious loss accruing from the reduced value of the Coffee. As an illustration I may mention, that in one single instance I had to give up a sum of £1,000 for deterioration of appearance of the Coffee when a price sale had been made for arrival.

9. The foregoing explanations will I trust satisfy His Lordship in Council, that this is not without reason that I ask consideration for a state of things so detrimental to interests, for which I think I may claim a title to a certain degree of protection. What I actually suffer, and from what cause, I beg to proceed to show.

10. The largest stream traversing the Canara high coast, is the Nellumboor

Nellumboor river. I am given to understand that the piers of the bridge to span this were constructed two years ago; but that nothing has since been done in respect of the superstructure! I do not undervalue the enormous difficulties in this in the shape of a temporary bridge such as those spoken of in para 6; but the apparently unaccountable delay that occurs in making this one available for the season's traffic is, as explained below, a source to me of the most serious and serious injury. I shall speak only of the operations of the present season, 1870-71; but it only echoes that of 1869-70.

11. In November last a number of my own Carts, loaded with Coffee, were sent inland from Cookalore to the Beypoor river. At the Nellumboor river, their further progress was arrested because the temporary bridge had not been made. And there they have been detained for about a month! Loss of interest, expenses of labour & deterioration, fret & cattle & loss of the use of them, by the drivers - are unfortunately the least of the resulting loss. If the means of crossing the river had been timely provided, these might by the middle of December, have been about 150 Tons (representing some £8000) despatched to the coast for preparation & shipment. Carts, in sufficient numbers, had offered for the transport of this quantity. But, when the Carts arrived

of this detention at the river's bank, they are all (very naturally) refused to carry any coffee for us; detaching themselves to another part of ground; and thus not only was there lost to us the present opportunity of an early despatch of so much of your crop, but we have been deprived of this large means of transport for the whole of the season. It may involve a pecuniary loss to be calculated only by thousands of pounds.

12. I would now venture to express the hope, that under the circumstances I have set forth this hardship in Carnick may be pleased to deem sufficient reason to exist for sanctioning the completion of the partially formed bridge on the Nellumboor river, and for ordering that any temporary bridges on the Caroor line may be completed so as to be available for traffic immediately, or soon after the close of the S.W. monsoon. Should however any simply financial consideration interfere with this, then I humbly trust that the Government will be pleased to refer the question with I hope, its favourable recommendation to His Grace the Secretary of State for India.

13. I have not adverted to this fact, but may here in conclusion mention, that a toll is, I learn, last season, levied for the use of this incomplete Caroor road.

I have the honor to be
Sir
Your most obedient Servant
C Orchterlony

London (at present Bendalen Cunningham Hall)
Sept 25 - 1871.

15

17

No 710

To

J. Auchterlony Esqr

Sir -

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th January 1871, and am in reply to state that the Government much regret that the small consignments of money for the Public Works of this Presidency of late years have made it impossible to appropriate funds &c

1871 Sept 1
Govt Gen Dept March
No 884.

From.
Mr J. Auchterlony

Dated 25 January } 1871
Recd: 25 Febry }

Bringing under the superintendence of the Public Dept the papers from the Mysore Country in the Carcor Grant to Calicut and Beypoor on the Western Coast.

No 709 & 710-9 hundy
With an order

Ordered that the Records be sent to Fort St George

No 239

London (at Mess)
Sept 25 - 1871.

for the completion
of the Nellumboor
Bridge, but a small
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allotted shortly -
The Bridge will
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of

of a few months -
19

Given to Mr Mottoosamy
Pillay 10/3/71 to be sent in
the Box going to the Secy of State

2V Cfo 554

Govt. of {1871} Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

To

Dated

Rec.d

Ans.d

G. O. of

Nos. 239 (a) 241