Political (1898) Department.

ORDINARY MS.

G.O., No. 40

DATED 18. 1. 98.

[Despatch Abstract.]

Comg: to the Resident in T & C Endorsement of the L & M Deptt. referring the letter from the Director of the North Travancore Land Planting & Agricultural Society regarding communications to the East of the High Range in Travancore to the President, Dt. Board, Madras for Early remarks.

T
18/1/98

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
00429/98							
857/98							

Local & Munl. (1898) Department.

CURRENT No. 15 A. L

No. 37 of 11-1-98
~~Order~~

From The Resident in Travancore

No. $\frac{x^3}{\text{Camp}}$

Referred to the President, District Board, Madura, for early remarks.

[illegible]
Ag. Secretary to Govt.
Recd. 13/1/98

Dated 2-1-98.
Received [illegible]
Registered
Enclosures
Spare copies.

SUBJECT.

Forwarding letter from the Director of the North Travancore Land Planting and Agricultural Society re: Communications to the east of the High Range in Travancore.

To,
The President, District Board, Madura.
" Resident in Travancore, through the Political Department.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

From the Resident in Travancore, No. [illegible] Cany dated 2d January 1898.

I beg leave to forward for the information of His Excellency the Governor in Council a letter original received from Mr. L. Davidson, Director of the North Travancore Land Planting and Agricultural Society whom I informed that during the Christmas vacation I hoped to have an opportunity of seeing His Excellency the Governor concerning the communications in and around N. Travancore, in which during his visit to that State His Excellency had taken much interest. I accordingly had the honour to lay Mr Davidson's letter before the Governor and was directed by His Excellency to send it in officially to his Government.

The Travancore Government has decided to open out first a bridle path and then a cart road from Mooner, the chief seat of the planting industry in the High range to the plains, an important project in which it is believed that considerable progress will be made in the current Malabar year, as the

two traces from the top and from the bottom have already met, and a regular estimate awaits the visit of the Chief Engineer of the Travancore State who is expected at Moonaar this month, concerning the Condition in regard to communications of this tract I had the honour to address Government in November 1896 forwarding a printed memorandum showing how exceedingly difficult of access on all sides is this important planting district, in which, as soon as communications permit, probably 10000 acres will be under tea, where not less than a hundred Europeans permanently reside, and which a company with a capital of 1½ millions sterling is opening. I think the date of my letter was Novr 3d 1896. Since then operations have been extended and subsequently contracted owing to the difficulty of getting up supplies for many thousands of coolies from the low country.

It will be inferred from Mr Davidson's letter, and it is I believe the case, that the Company is satisfied that the Travancore Government is doing its best to open out communications through 30 or 40 miles of diffe[illegible] Ghaut, of mountain ridges, rivers and forests at once malarious in the highest degree, un[illegible] inhabitable for several months of the year owing to rain or fever, and swarming with wild elephants of which coolies, and not only coolies, are, and not without reason, afraid.

Mr Davidson's present complaint is of roads on the British side. With these I am well acquainted as in order to approach the High Range it is still necessary to use the British roads, except and when time and resources permit, a long, difficult, and exceedingly expensive march over the Cardamum Hills. It is undoubtedly true that the road from Periyakulam to the foot of the Ghaut road to Devikulam is a mere track and quite unworthy of the requirements of the case. I merely state the fact and I am not unaware of the resources of the Local Board, in administering which, as Sub Collector of Madura, I was in former years concerned. It is also true that up to the foot of the summer station of Kodaikanal and up to that sanitarium

excellent road is maintained, and it is
and to say that Mr. Davidson is not
justified in pointing out how much more urgent
portant to the Madura District is the High
Range planting district than the Kodaikanal
station, which affords a refuge from the Summer
heat — or did in former years — to private
persons for the most part during the greater
part of the year is almost deserted. Not only
is the road from Bodinaikanur to the foot
of the ghaut to Devikulam of the character
described, but the road from Periyakulam to
Bodinaikanur and even to Kumili, the
Travancore frontier, is very inferior to the road
from the railway at Dindigal to Kodaikanal
point at which the road to Kodaikanal
takes off, that is to say up to Periyakulam.
The "ghaut road or ropeway", which
Mr. Davidson says the Company is going to
construct is of course to be on the east side
and to end where the Madura roads begin.
On the South side the Company has practi-
cally made a fair bridle path to the
Coimbatore border, and it has made for
the bridle path to the plains on the west
Mr. Davidson may fairly say that it do
"for itself". The labour and supplies however
chiefly come, and even after the west road
is opened, will probably chiefly come, from
the east side, and whatever may be done
on the North and the west, the eastern or
British Communications will always be of
vital importance to the Company and to
Travancore.

As regards telegraphs an office at
Poonar would be a very great convenience
officially, as well as to this enterprize, and I
hope Government will see fit to address the
Director-General on the subject. The necessary
statistics will be forthcoming when required.

Turning to the Postal facilities, or to
their absence, it certainly seems desirable that
a separate bag for Devikulam should
be made up, if, as Mr. Davidson no doubt
correctly surmises, this is not at present
done. The letters

2.

time in transit and every effort should
be made to expedite delivery.

For all the above reasons and for
those forcibly stated in the last paragraph
of Mr Davidson's letter, the matter is one
of great importance, and as one well ac-
quainted with the localities in question,
I can state from my own knowledge that
Mr Davidson does not exaggerate the diffi-
culties of which he complains. Difficulties
are inherent in the prosecution of large
enterprizes in inaccessible tracts, but Govern-
ment will no doubt desire to reduce them
to the lowest possible limit, and I trust
some means may be devised of making
the approaches to the High Range, ~~which~~ worthy
of so splendid a field for enterprize, which
contains within a comparatively small area
so many varities of climate, so much
magnificent forest and pasture, in short
such great capabilities from so many
different points of view. Want of proper
communication must seriously retard a

development which I think nothing
ultimately prevent.

Enclosure.-

Letter from Mr J. Davidson, Director of the
North Travancore Land Planting and Agri-
cultural Society - to Hon. J. D. Rees, dated 18th
December 1897.

I came out here lately to co-operate
with Mr Wilbur in developing the North Travan-
core Land Planting and Agricultural
Society's Concession, and the roads, and
kindred matters will be under my more
immediate direction in future.

Knowing the interest you have taken
in trying to have justice done in the
matter of outlet roads for the outlying
portion of the Travancore State, and that
you are going to see Sir Arthur Havelock
in Madras shortly I address you privately,
in the hope and belief that his personality
becoming acquainted with the state of
affairs here will result in

...ut right as they concern his Government largely and ourselves vitally.

The urgent and pressing wants are:-

(1) Roads

(2) Postal and Telegraph facilities.

As you know, this Company has started work on these hills backed by strong capitalists.

They have purchased properties which in their late owners hands, were not a commercial success, and it is only by the completion of a system of roads (to get in labourers, and to get in food by carts or other vehicles to feed the labourers) that success can be looked for. The Travancore Government has recognised the great benefits which will accrue from the development of this part of their territory, and are making provision for a cart road to the west. The Company itself is arranging to open up 16 miles [illegible] t road, or tramway and a wire difference [illegible] the Kotagudi ghaut to a point [illegible] miles from Bodi, and spending

say £25,000/ on the scheme, but, the British Government, represented by the Madura Local Fund Board, has, so far, as I can find out, done almost nothing to improve its cart Road from Periyakulam to the foot of the ghaut, which is in a disgraceful state with a daily increasing traffic.

I can hardly conceive that the argument is seriously used, that because the actual Concession, is in Travancore territory, the British Government should not put in order, and keep its roads bridged; as to my mind the advantage to any Government of having wealth poured into it without having to undertake any of the ordinary costs of administration is a cogent argument for its treating that territory in a fair way at least, or rather of acting liberally towards it, yet, what do we find here? from Ammayanaikanur to Periyakulam, where wealthy Europeans, and Missionaries branch off for the Hill [illegible]

and where they enjoy themselves during the hot season, the road is excellent but between that point, and the bottom of the ghaut to this concession, most of the road is in a deplorable condition, and no bridges on 2 rivers, liable to flood, and I know from His Excellency's rule in Ceylon, that he has only got to see it, to ensure justice being done. It would ill become me to say that those on pleasure bent going to Kodikanal should not have a pleasant journey in their cushioned conveyances, and spring transits, but what I do say, and feel with some warmth, is, that while they are enjoying the luxuries of that Sanitarium we who contribute large sums to the wealth, and indirectly to the revenue of the country, should have reasonable facilities for feeding the 6000, and more labourers on these hills, by having the roads to the ghaut put into good order and kept in good order. Remember we

[illegible] road (of [illegible] class which I believe was refused to planter similarly placed in another portion of South India by His Excellency lately) we are asking that a road passing through villages, should be properly kept up, and we are going to construct the ghaut road, or ropeway, ourselves, and also a road through a large section of the property, but it seems to me that there is a prospect of the good result of the ropeway, and road; we are constructing, being of comparatively little use, if the road from Periyakulam to the foot of the ghaut say 28 miles, all flat and easy to handle, is not put in order now.

At present not less than Rs 300,000, per annum in wages, and payment of rice, &c goes down into British territory, and is distributed among the natives, and were roads and ghaut ropeway finished this would soon be increased by several times the amount; but unless we

[illegible] ... more satisfactory basis than they are at present, the extensions will come to a stand still, and the enterprise may be strangled. Under the circumstances I would ask you to lay the matter before His Excellency, and press the urgency of it, on him. God helps those who help themselves, and we are willing to bear our fair share, and more than our share of the work in the Ghaut way, and 16 miles of road, and, if His Excellency could find the time to come up and see for himself I will arrange horses, and he will understand the difficulties we have presently to surmount, and could judge for himself what His Government, as represented by Madura Local Fund Board, should do, and has done.

I would therefore ask that the road from Periyakulam to the foot of the Ghaut, where ropeway will stop, should be put, and kept in the same order as the road from Periyakulam to Kankanur and that the rivers be bridged. We will do the Ghaut ourselves.

I quite recognise that the pressure of funds might be used by Local Board, owing to the present but I would rather ask our people advantage the money to be repaid over say 4 or 5 years, than delay the developing of the property.

The other matters I wish to call attention to are Telegraphs; we would guarantee the number of messages necessary, if extended to Kumar 25 to 30 miles from Bodey and indeed the number is at present far in excess of what is necessary, and instead of getting a telegram from 24 to 36 hours after arrives at Bodey, we would have it at once, as the delay in getting a wire and sending a reply to the office a great extent makes the telegraph

mo to us here.

at Mr. Muir is consulting with the
a aph Director General about it, in
scutta, and when I hear, I will let
u know.

Postal Facilities; this is the last matter
will trouble you with now coming
from a comparatively up to date place
like Ceylon, how they manage to
lay a letter from Madras so that
it takes 3½ to 4 days is beyond me;
et I expect it is in sending it to
Pyakulam to be resorted there. I am going
to the matter now, and will address the
st Master General Madras shortly,
but what we desire is to have letters
for Devikulam and Munar and Bodi,
sorted at Madras ~~or in~~ train, and sent
separate bags direct to those
stations, instead of wasting one to two
days on the road. A Tonga could bring
the quite direct from Ammayanaikanur
Bodi / and the amount of mail matter
does

does far more than repay the cost) —
while it would remove what I consider
is a blot in the Indian Postal Depart
ment's administration.

In case I have not made road
matters clear enough, we have something
between 1500 to 2000 pack animals —
bringing up food and goods 35 miles, and
one bad attack of murrain would reduce
our force of say 6000 souls to starvation
so it is urgent and pressing in the
extreme.

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[G / 24]
1,000-18-9-97.

Pol DEPARTMENT.

Papers to be read in proceedings:—

Again G.O., No. , dated 189 .

Again G.O., No. , dated 189 .

Current No. 77 of 1898, dated 11th January from The L & M Deptt

" " " 189 , " , "

" " " 189 , " , "

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ORDER. No. 40 & 18.1.98

Communicated to the Resident in Travancore & Cochin.

Cmd
MLS
18.1.98

To
The Resdt in T&C (q of the Resdt's letter & A of dtd Sndt)

When given for copying / *When copied* 18 1 / *When examined* 20 1 / *When signed* — 1898.							
READ AGAIN G.O., No. , DATED 189 .							
CURRENT No.							
ENCLOSURES TO C. No.							
ORDER OF GOVERNMENT	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.							
STATEMENT WITH DITTO.							
PAPERS NOT FILED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DESPATCH IN ORIGINAL.							

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