M.R.O. 1—29,000—16-10-29.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1147	Press Mis.
Dated 10 [illegible]	19

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 120. Read the following letter from T. A. N. CHASE, Esq., Acting Magistrate of Nellore, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Nellore, 1st October 1866, No. 46.

I have the honor to inform you that, during a Meeting of the Municipal Commissioners, which I had convened on Saturday, 29th ultimo, to take into consideration the introduction of the Towns' Improvement Act from the 1st November, five of the Commissioners presented a protest against the introduction of the Act till after the rice crops have been reaped.

2. The present scarcity, the high prices of grain, and the poverty of the people are grounds on which the protest is made.

3. I forward it on without remark, for the consideration of Government, considering that, as the protest is made by so large a number of Commissioners, I have no other course open to me.

4. The Government are aware that the Magistrate, Mr. Dykes, is at present absent from the District on leave, and that it is impossible for me, who am at present acting for a few months for him, to know exactly his wishes regarding the introduction of the Act, to do which, properly, a great deal of local knowledge is requisite. I have not the knowledge of this town that Mr. Dykes possesses, having been only a month in it. I think, therefore, it would be advantageous to delay the introduction of the Act, certainly till after the expiration of Mr. Dykes' leave, or about the 1st January 1867.

Considerations to postpone the introduction of the Towns' Improvement Act in Nellore.

It is an universally admitted fact that this year is the worst that has been known in the annals of history; in which the Natives of India have suffered for want of even the bare necessaries of life.

2. Setting aside all minor considerations, let the humane view, if not a liberal one, of the present condition of the people as a body, the season, also what the latter promises for the future, as these affect the welfare of the people whose safety and well-being, it is the spirit of the Act to secure, be taken into consideration.

3. It cannot be denied for a moment that a system of taxation, whatever may it be, should have prominently in view the condition of the people and the season.

4. Every living being in Nellore would bear ample testimony to what the state of Nellore was a few months ago, even as to the supply of water—an article required to the existence of the animal next to life. Turn back to the months of April and May:—The Pennair was dry, and not a drop of water was to be had at several depths, when excavations were made. All the wells nearly were dry, and large crowds were engaged at any well night and day, where any water was to be found—a crisis unknown to the present generation in Nellore. Up to the present time, even the average fall of rain is far, far below the average known for years past; and now what is the prospect as to the food?

5. The scarcity of grain in this part is no disputed point to be settled now. Nellore, for the present, no doubt, supplies grain to several of the neighbouring sister Districts, and what is the result? The prices have doubled and tripled, and there is deep apprehension that the grain, even of the commonest kind now in store, would be exhausted before long. This prospect is aggravated, considering our gloomy future. Why is there a gloomy future, is a riddle to be solved, taking surrounding circumstances together. What are the prospects of the District as to the cultivation and the ensuing harvest? Hoping for the better, and in anticipation of fall of rain, the lands North of Pennair have been sown with paddy, though there was little or no supply in the tanks &c.; but the present state of the crops forebodes worse results, owing to the failure of seasonable

rains. The only hope now is the rains expected in October and November (which is a source of no considerable anxiety), which the Natives call the rain of "Chittakarte;" and should this fail, which God guard against, we are undone. But why not fall back on our works of irrigation, is a question. If the irrigation works are at all beneficial, it is only in Delta Villages; but what avails even irrigation works, when even the very rain fails? And an additional misfortune in connection with the lands of the coast Taluqs is that they would yield nothing but wet grain, the soil not at all admitting of cultivation of any description of dry grain. And when prospects in the so called rich Taluqs on the coast are such, the tale of the western dry grain-cultivating land (which solely depends for its production on timely, seasonable, and periodical rains) needs not be told.

6. Taking a hopeful future, the present condition of the people requires serious consideration in carrying out the proposed taxation.

7. The cries of even the middle classes of the people, who would contribute to a large extent to the funds, is deplorable; what was sold for 20 or 21 is now sold at 60. The famine prices have continued for the last 10 or 12 years, that people have been literally impoverished. Moreover, to add to the difficulties of a sad future, the merchants and ryots who have any store of grain have become over-cautious, seize every hour to raise the present prices, which tells painfully on the suffering laboring classes. The demands of food, grain, &c., from Madras and Western Districts, up to this moment, are so heavy, that the speculating merchants have taken the advantage of exporting grains, with high profit, than disposing them by retail sale, at moderate premium, under the impression that the sudden rise of prices might cause uneasiness to the majority of population, which might result to a serious outbreaking. In fact, they have closed several shops in the bazaar since 27th instant, pretending that they have no grain in stock. The sufferings of the people thereby are inexpressible.

	1865. Value per putti.	1866. Value per putti.
	RS.	RS.
Paddy	37	52
Jonna	42	68
Raggy	32	61
Gram	63	105

8. The marginal Statement will show the rates of prices, &c., in the months of September, both in 1865 and 1866.

9. Another disadvantage which the working classes labor under, is the want of works at this unfortunate season. The Department Public Works' works in the neighbourhood of Nellore, about Kanali, have been stopped as usual, because the rainy weather has commenced, although there is not any rain, so as to be in any way prejudicial to the works, and the Madras Irrigation Company have disbanded their workmen for good, within a few miles from Nellore.

10. Now as to the direct working of the Act:—

11. The funds required to put the Act into full operation must be raised by necessarily bringing into operation all the provisions of the taxation (Sections 37, 45, 50, 57 and 65).

12. As to the funds available under Section 37 of the Act on houses, &c., this will be charged on all classes, the rich and the poor, save Yanadies perhaps, in the Town. And although the President is authorized to make exceptions, under Section 36, certainly not *general* exemptions could not be made, and scarcely any class will be exempted from the operation of this Section (37), although many are begging for their bread: and merchants of this town have not, as a rule, many houses, for their capital is circulating, and hence they will contribute comparatively very little. But as to the share which merchants may be alleged to contribute to a great extent under Schedule A, much logic need not be wasted; for they will raise proportionately the prices to equalize their expenditure, and even more, under the color of taxation, and the free trade giving them a helping hand. The working of Schedule B would also tend to raise prices, both in the Mofussil and the Presidency town, if they would not, for some time, impede the free import and exportations of grains. And these too serve to keep down the other classes, though they are not, to a certain extent, directly subjected to Schedules A & B.

13. Having briefly, yet perhaps inadequately, jotted down on the glaring evils which threaten taxation at this critical time, it will not be out of place to consider the dangers by postponing the introduction of the Act.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
15th October 1866.

14. Under the funds to be derived of the late Town Conservancy Collections, &c., there is sufficient hopes of keeping up the Town improvements, in a sanitary point of view, till the commencement of the next official year. There are now already sufficient numbers of carts* and Scavengers† to remove the filth of the Town, as heretofore, daily; and to provide for this Establishment we have on hand, say the least, 600 Rupees. Then, so far as to the cleansing of the town is concerned, there is no danger by the postponement. The health of the people has been singularly good this year in the town, however sickness prevailed in the District; and experience shows there is no fear of any change, before next hot weather, say April or May.

* 3 Carts.
† 9 Scavengers.

15. The above item of charge having been disposed of, the next prominent item is the Police. Here the Municipality will have to pay monthly Rupees 298 to help Government, in relief to the Imperial Funds; this comes up to 1800 Rupees for six months. This is not a large sum to Government to contribute under existing distress, while the evil of raising the same from the suffering poor is inutterable. Government have very liberally contributed larger sums of money in relieving the distressed of many a District and Town; and instance is not wanting in which Government have kindly promised to take a favorable view in similar cases, say in respect to Wallajapett, in North Arcot District.

16. Taking all the above into serious consideration, it would be most desirable to postpone the Act till January 1867, if not to the next official year, by which time the harvest of the existing crops will be over; and it would be blessing to the country, when it is fervently hoped times might change for the better, season, prices, and all.

17. Hoping to be excused for the liberty thus taken, we remain,

(Signed) K. SUBBAROW.
(,,) V. VENCATROW.
(,,) A. JAGANNADHROW.
(,,) D. CHENCHURAMI SETTI.
(,,) CHUNDURU VENUGOPALA SETTI.

No. 121. ODERR THEREON, 15th October 1866, No. 1049.

The Government have carefully considered the recommendation of the Native Members of the Committee.

2. The present season has no doubt been an unfavorable one, but the District of Nellore has suffered far less than many others, into which, nevertheless, the Municipal Act is about to be introduced. The Act has already been deferred for six months, and the advance which Government has sanctioned of a moiety of their contribution will, in fact, enable the Committee to commence operations without the immediate levy of taxes. The advantages which will result to the towns-people from the operation of the Act will be very great, while the rate of taxation will be very light. Under these circumstances, the Government regret that further postponement cannot be sanctioned.

(True Extract).

Chief Secretary.

To the Magistrate of Nellore.
,, Inspector General of Police.

Exd. J. H. Burns.

Public

No. 1265.

From The Acting Mayor of Nellore.
Dt. 1st Oct. 1866.

For Orders.

The state has not been so bad in Nellore as it has been in many of the Districts - and the State Prisoners with remonstrances on a pool charge of assassination. If the introduction of the Act be dispensed in the case of Nellore it would in most of the Towns of the Presidency - I think it should go on. It may be pointed out to the Petitioners that all the assessment of the Municipal taxes must be taken in hand at once, yet that the levy of them will not begin

Act is to take effect from
1st. Nov. and on first ad.
pence a majority of them
entertaining, and the Inn.
keepers with to the same
time to carry out. I doubt if
the people will really be called
on to make any payments
much before January next.
If the Act be forthwith in
Ireland, it must be forthwith
every where, save perhaps the Co.
Derry & ~~Clare~~ Kilkenny: a most mis-
chievous association, principle &
practical. We can scarcely wait
for the "Cat" although the Mice are
[illegible]

15 Oct 1866 No 1049

The Govt have care-
fully considered
the recommendation
of the Native Members
of the Council
The present Session
has not yet been
unfavourable and
but the District of
Nellore has gathered
far less than many
others in the whole,
Nevertheless the Municipal
Act is a boon to be
introduced - The Act
has already been de-
ferred for Six Months
and the advance which
Govt has sanctioned of
a moiety of the Contri-
-bution will, in fact,
enable the Com-
to commence operation
without further unnecessary

Madras 1866.

From
The Secretary to Government
Madras.
To
The Chief Secretary to
Government Fort
St George

Madras 15th October
Copy 20th October
Copy 5th

Sir

Reporting for the
[illegible]

I have &c

W Oakes

Madras 16th October 1866.

Sir

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, and to request that you will be good enough to state whether the Municipal Act for Nellore will be brought into force during the present year, or whether it will be postponed until the commencement of next year.

I have &c

W Oakes

Secretary to Government

To
The Collector of Nellore