Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
13th August 1869.

No. 97. Read the following letter from the President of the Municipal Commission, Calicut, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Calicut, 19th July 1869, No. 22.

Hoping for the favourable consideration of Government, I have the honour to lay before you the following circumstances concerning the Calicut Municipality.

2. On taking charge of the district and becoming President of the Municipal Commission, I found that the Municipality had spent all but Rupees 2468 of its realized income, and that at the same time the whole of the police charge for 1868-69 was still unpaid and the immediate repair of many miles of roads necessary. In round numbers the Municipality had to meet liabilities to the extent of Rupees 10,000 beyond the regular monthly expenditure. It is true Rupees 5537 was still due as uncollected balance remaining due from former years. The course directed by the Act had not been taken for the recovery of these sums, and I at once directed the issue of the necessary notices and distress warrants. Those who have been permitted to defer payment according to their will for periods of one, two, and three years naturally displayed great unwillingness to meet the demands of the Municipality when at last called upon, and the outstandings are being collected slowly and with some difficulty. I am told Rupees 2000 are irrecoverable.

3. In view, therefore, of the immediate necessity for obtaining funds to enable the Municipality to meet its liabilities and assume in fact a solvent position without which it was worse than idle to contemplate and estimate the simplest improvements which it was apparent at the time could never be paid for, the Commission set itself to consider the means for raising more funds. Various propositions were discussed, and, finally, it was with some reluctance agreed (if absolutely necessary) to raise the rate already collected on houses from 5 to 7½ per cent., and to levy a tax of one rupee on each bullock; but it was stipulated that the Government should first be solicited to aid the Municipality in its temporary difficulty with a moderate sum by way of gift, and it was suggested the Government might not refuse a grant from the proceeds of the Kallai ferry, the ferry being within Municipal limits.

4. This request, therefore, I now lay before Government, and trust, for the following reasons, that it may be complied with :—

I learn on inquiry that, to a certain extent, the best houses are occupied by impoverished members of families by no means possessed now of the wealth which justified the erection of such buildings, and it will, no doubt, press hard on them to raise the rate of taxation. The bullock-tax I deprecate, because it tends to lay the burden on the shoulders of the comparatively poor and the working members of the community. I should be glad, if possible, to dispense with the necessity for raising these new imposts, and though it is undoubted that the Municipality ought to be able to raise all the funds that it requires, I think it has a fair claim on the consideration of Government, on the following three grounds :—

5. 1*st*.—That it has hitherto met all its claims in accordance with the wishes of Government with[illegible] having recourse to the levying of tolls, so large an item in almost all other Municipalities, a ready means by which those Municipalities have in fact, at least partially, removed from their own shoulders no inconsiderable portion of the burden of taxation.

2nd.—The cause that has brought about the present difficulty, viz., the large expenditure on roads. Since its institution the Municipality has spent on an average Rupees 12,558 a year on the formation and maintenance of roads. There are now thirty-seven miles of metalled Municipal roads, part of which are new, and part have been almost re-formed. The general trade of the place, its decency, comfort and health, and the number of wheel-carriages owned in it have steadily and fast increased in consequence.

Of the aggregate income of Rupees 65,552 for 2½ years, Rupees 31,395 have been spent on roads, Rupees 10,641 on Police, Rupees 13,550 on latrines, scavenging, repairing the canal and other miscellaneous improvements, and 9966 on account of establishment.

It must be conceded, I think, that the income has been well and carefully laid out, and that whereas, at Ootacamund and other places, the Municipal roads have in the first instance been constructed, metalled, and made over in perfect order to the Municipality, Calicut has had to incur a large expenditure to bring them to their present condition.

3rd.—This large expenditure on the formation of roads is an exceptional thing which will not recur. The Municipality is perfectly prepared to maintain the present roads, and also to add to them gradually from time to time, and some help towards the expense of the first formation is, therefore, I submit, no unreasonable request.

6. The Government will learn, from the annual report and estimates, that the Municipality propose spending a large sum monthly on further improvements, and I trust they will, by a grant of Rupees 5000 from imperial funds, (to which Rupees 2000 from Municipal sources would at once be added for the payment of the Police bill for 1868-69,) enable it to commence the year without the heavy burden of debt which will otherwise incumber it.

No. 98. ORDER THEREON, 13th August 1869, No. 1140.

Resolved that the President of the Municipal Commission for the town of Calicut be informed that the Government are not prepared to sanction grant of Rupees 5000 towards the expenditure connected with that Municipality.

2. If the taxes, &c., to be realized are inadequate to provide for expenditure urgently required on works of a permanent character, the Government will consider favourably any application which the Commissioners may submit for a loan repayable with interest at six per cent. within six years.

(True Extract).

Chief Secretary.

To the President of the Municipal Commission, Calicut.

Exd. J. Wright.

Govt. of Madras.

PUBLIC.

To

THE PRESIDENT OF THE
MUNICIPAL COMMISSION,
Cuddalore.

Dated August, 13th.

Recd. *Encl.*

G. O., 13th August 1869, No. 1140.

AUGUST.
Nos. 97-98.

Declining to sanction a grant of Rupees [illegible] towards the expenditure connected with the Cuddalore Municipality.

the Commissioners may submit, for a loan, payable with interest, at six per cent, within six years.

To
The President of the
Immel. Coms.n, Calient.

to place a sum of Rs [illegible] at their disposal for opening a road and cleaning a canal in the Municipality. A moiety of the amount was given as a grant-in-aid, and the Commissioners were required to pay back the other moiety, which they did.

4. It does not seem desirable that the Govt should again aid the Municipality with a grant of Rs 5000. If the taxes, to be realized are insufficient to meet present demands, the Commissioners should apply to the Govt for a loan, on the condition of raising a loan, by hypothecating the rate on houses and buildings, which, as per Estimate for 1869-70, was expected to realize

Lowest upset to grant it.
WDR

WDR

The Consul of the
Calicut Municipality
requesting a grant
of Rs 500/- for
Accup.

(12)

Govt. of 1186 } Madras

To

Date } 190 No.
Recd.

Nos. 97. 98.

Beginning to
Sanctioning a grant of
Rs. 5,500 towards the
expenditure connected
with the Cabinet Stamp
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