

20
5-4-37
M.E.O. 1-38,000-10-10-38

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Police DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	1539	Press Min.
Dated	29-11-1970	149-50.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
29th November 1870.*

No. 149. Read the following letter from W. R. CORNISH, Esq., F.R.C.S., Sanitary Commissioner for Madras, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Madras, 2nd November 1870, No. 981:—

Although the subject of the present communication is one not wholly connected with sanitary administration, I have the honour very respectfully to request that it may be laid before the Right Honourable the Governor in Council for such consideration as it may seem to merit.

2. During the course of a tour through the Southern Districts of this Presidency, I have often had occasion to notice the rude and undeveloped condition of the potters' art, and the impossibility of local municipalities obtaining even the simplest appliances in earthenware for the drainage and water-supply of their respective localities. The drainage of Indian towns under any circumstances is a subject beset with difficulties; but when I mention that the method of glazing a common drainage pipe or tile is unknown amongst the potters of Southern India, and that, before any system of removal of sewage by impervious tubes can be adopted in a town, every piece of piping must be imported from Europe at an enormously enhanced cost for freight and inland delivery, I need hardly remark that Municipal Associations for the most part stand aghast at the cost, and prefer to devise temporary expedients rather than saddle their town funds with debts out of all proportion to current income.

3. A great desideratum in almost every town is a system of a saucer-shaped surface tiles to carry away the liquid refuse of houses. These tiles in an unglazed shape are readily procurable, and where they have been tried are found to be a decided improvement on the old rectangular-shaped brick-and-mortar drains, which did nothing but clog with sewage deposits and yield noisome gases to poison the town air.

4. But the common surface "saucer-shaped" tile is very far from perfection. It absorbs moisture, and in that condition is offensive, besides being liable to break. Being porous, it allows damp to accumulate underneath it. What is apparently wanted is a glazed surface that shall not interfere with the free flow of fluid, and that shall be practically non-absorbent. To obtain such tiles or drainage tubes in India at a cost within the means of most of our municipal towns is quite out of the question. The art of making them is unknown to the caste of potters. Clever as these people are in the manipulation of plastic clays, the secret of rendering these vessels impervious to moisture by the addition of a suitable glaze is as a sealed book to them.

5. Considering that the potters of to-day have not made the slightest advance in their handicraft as understood by their ancestors of thousands of years ago (whose workmanship we may frequently observe when cairns and burial-places are disturbed), and looking to the hopelessness of expecting any improvement from these people if left to their own devices, I would venture to suggest that the time has come for the Government to interfere in the development of one of the most useful of the common arts. The mode in which Government encouragement should be given is a subject on which a diversity of opinion may reasonably exist, but it seems to me that, in the first place, a thoroughly-trained and scientific person, practically acquainted with the manufacture of coarse earthenware, should be engaged by the Secretary of State to examine and report on the pottery materials to be found in various localities, and to superintend a practical school in which the people of the country might be instructed in the art of glazing and firing pottery, and especially

of

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
29th November 1870.*

of such articles as would be in demand amongst the people themselves, or such as would be required by Government or municipal towns for building and sanitary purposes.

6. I am aware that a good deal of information has already been collected on the subject of pottery materials, and that the Superintendent of the School of Arts, Madras, has not lost sight of the importance of giving instruction in the manufacture of glazed pottery. The difficulties to be overcome, as I understand them, are such as can be only dealt with by a thoroughly practical person, whose whole time has been given to the practice of the art. In a late Proceeding of Government, I observe that the Superintendent of the School of Arts, Madras, admits that his establishment has not the means or the requisite knowledge for making a hard glaze, and that, as a consequence, his establishment could not undertake to manufacture urinals as required for barracks and hospitals. For sanitary work generally, it is essential that the processes of glazing pottery should be thoroughly understood, and, as it would seem to be hopeless to expect any one in India to possess the required technical knowledge, I feel assured that the most satisfactory results would accrue if a competent person was selected and sent out to India, under a definite engagement for a term of years, to found a school of pottery. I think, also, it would be highly desirable that a few practical workmen should be brought either from England or China to superintend the works established in various localities.

7. There is one very remarkable fact that I should wish Government to consider in disposing of this question. It is that, amongst the great bulk of the population of Southern India, common white earthenware bowls and basins are rapidly superseding the old-fashioned plates of sewn leaves which formerly all classes used when eating.

8. On journeying across the Tanjore District lately, my attention was particularly struck by the number of shops and bazaars in which coarse China and English made earthenware bowls were exposed for sale. Frequently, along the road-sides, on festival or market days, the dealers would have their articles displayed in great profusion. On inquiry, I learnt that the trade lay chiefly with Singapore, to which free port both China and English ware is largely shipped and brought away by native craft trading between the Straits and our Southern Ports.

A good-sized basin, holding from two to three pints, can be bought in the Tanjore District from four to five Annas, and the smaller sized at lower rates. In Trichinopoly and on the Western Coast the trade in this earthenware is, I imagine, rapidly increasing. All classes of Sudras, Christians, and the lower castes prefer eating from these bowls, and estimate them to be cheaper and more cleanly than a number of banyan leaves stitched together as a temporary plate.

Brahmins, I am informed, still adhere to the leaf-plates (fearing, probably, the possibility of pollution) and are about the only people who do not adopt English or China made earthenware as their food utensils.

9. I have no statistics at hand showing what the development of the Indian trade in coarse China and English ware may be; but I feel certain that the demand for such articles is extending coincidently with the wealth and civilization of the people. It becomes, therefore, a very important question whether the dependence of the millions of India for articles of household necessity shall, or shall not, be left entirely to foreign markets, while the soils of India yield in abundance the materials, which, in educated hands, might be made to supply in part, if not wholly, the require-

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
29th November 1870.*

ments of this vast country. If the people are beginning to appreciate the more perfect forms of earthenware vessels that have resulted from improvements in the potters' art, I would submit that some efforts might well be bestowed upon the technical education of the potters of this country so as to enable them to keep pace in some degree with the artisans of other countries.

10. I trust to be excused mentioning that the potters' art in Great Britain, until comparatively modern times, was by no means perfect. English householders before the time of Wedgewood, just a century ago, if they used earthenware at all, depended for their supply chiefly on the Dutch, whose "Delft-ware" was most commonly used in Europe in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries.

Improvements in the art of mixing pottery materials and in the quality of ware were jealously guarded as secrets, and the knowledge confined but to a few. The modern development of the English pottery trade being not quite a century old, the circumstance, I submit, should encourage us to hope that, under skilful teaching, and with the accumulated experience of other countries available for the guidance of Indian Artizans, a thriving industry may, in course of time, be developed, and the social status of the potter class greatly improved.

11. Viewing the question of pottery manufacture as a public health officer, I may be permitted to state that India wants, not only glazed tubes that shall carry water or sewage free of admixture from without, but that glazed tiling for hospital floors, bath-rooms, urinals for barracks, and cheap earthenware for domestic use, would always be in demand. A new industry, in fact, remains to be created, and I trust I may have said enough to induce the Government to recommend to the Secretary of State for India that measures be taken to train up a school of Indian potters in the art of manufacturing coarse ware suited to the special wants of the country.

No. 150. ORDER THEREON, 29th November 1870, No. 1539.

Before passing final orders on the recommendation contained in the letter above recorded, His Excellency in Council resolves to furnish a copy of it to Dr. Hunter, the Superintendent of the School of Arts, and to request him to submit a report upon the progress that has, up to the present date, been made by the School of Arts in the art of glazing and firing pottery, especially as regards tiles and pipes required for conservancy purposes.

2. Dr. Hunter will describe the difficulties which have been met with in this branch of pottery and the amount of assistance from England he requires.

3. A copy of Dr. Cornish's letter will also be referred to Dr. Duff, who is requested to favour the Government with any suggestions on the subject of the Sanitary Commissioner's letter which may occur to him.

(True Extract.)

Chief Secretary.

To the Sanitary Commissioner.

.. Director of Public Instruction.

.. Superintendent, School of Arts.

To Surgeon-Major C. M. Duff, M. D.

Ed. J. H. Burns.

of

No. 981.

OFFICE OF SANITARY COMMISSIONER,
Madras, 2nd November 1870.

From

To

The Sanitary Commissioner for Madras,
The Chief Secretary to Government
Public Department
Fort St. George.

SIR,

Although the subject of the present communication is one not wholly connected with Sanitary administration, I have the honor very respectfully to request that it may be laid before the Right Honorable the Governor in Council for such consideration as it may seem to merit.

Enclosure.

2. During the course of a tour through the Southern Districts of this Presidency, I have often had occasion to notice the rude and undeveloped condition of the potters' art, and the impossibility of local municipalities obtaining even the simplest appliances in earthenware for the drainage and water supply of their respective localities. The drainage

of

Office of 1870

PUBLIC.

To
THE SANITARY COMMISSIONER,
Ac., Ac., Ac.

Dated November, 29th.
Recd.

G. O., 20th November 1870. No. 149-150.

NOVEMBER.
Nos. 149-150.

Forwarding to the Superintendent, School of Arts, and to Mr. Duff, for report, copies of a letter from Mr. Cornish on the subject of the art of firing and firing pottery.

of Indian towns under any circumstances is a subject beset with difficulties; but when I mention that the method of glazing a common drainage pipe or tile is unknown amongst the potters of Southern India, and that before any system of removal of sewage by impervious tubes can be adopted in a town, every piece of piping must be imported from Europe at an enormously enhanced cost for freight and inland delivery, I need hardly remark that Municipal Associations, for the most part staid and aghast at the cost, and prefer to devise temporary expedients rather than saddle their town funds with debts, out of all proportion to current income.

3. A great desideratum in almost every town is a system of saucer shaped surface tiles to carry away the liquid refuse of houses. These tiles in an unglazed shape are readily procurable, and where they have been tried are found to be a decided improvement on the old ^{rectangular} shaped brick and mortar drains, which did nothing but clog with sewage deposits and yield noxious gases to

poison the

poison the town air

4.

But the common surface "Saucer shaped" tile is very far from perfection. It absorbs moisture and in that condition is offensive besides being liable to break. Being porous it allows damp to accumulate underneath it. What is apparently wanted is a glazed surface that shall not interfere with the free flow of fluid, and that shall be practically non-absorbent. To obtain such tiles or drainage tubes in India at a cost within the means of most of our municipal towns is quite out of the question. The art of making them is unknown to the caste of potters.

Glaze as these people are in the manipulation of plastic clays, the secret of rendering these vessels impervious to moisture by the addition of a suitable glaze is as a sealed book to them.

5. Considering that the potters of today have not made the slightest advance in their handicraft as understood by their ancestors of thousands of years ago (whose workmanship we may frequently observe when

caius

cairns and burial places are disturbed) and looking to the hopelessness of expecting any improvement from these people if left to their own devices. I would venture to suggest that the time has come for the Government to interfere in the development of one of the most useful of the common arts. The mode in which Government encouragement should be given is a subject on which a diversity of opinion may reasonably exist, but it seems to me that in the first place a thoroughly trained and scientific person, practically acquainted with the manufacture of coarse earthenware, should be engaged by the Secretary of State to examine and report on the pottery materials to be found in various localities, and to superintend a practical School, in which the people of the country might be instructed in the art of glazing and firing pottery, and especially of such articles as would be in demand amongst the people themselves or such as would be required by Government, or municipal towns for building and Sanitary purposes.

b. I am aware that a good deal

deal of information has already been ^{but} collected on the subject of pottery materials, and that the Superintendent of the School of Arts, Madras has not lost sight of the importance of giving instruction in the manufacture of glazed pottery. The difficulties to be overcome, as I understand them, are such as can be only dealt with by a thoroughly practical person, whose whole time has been given to the practice of the art. In a late proceedings of Government I observe that the Superintendent of the School of Arts, Madras admits that his establishment has not the means or the requisite knowledge for making hard glaze and that as a consequence his establishment could not undertake to manufacture urinals as required for Barracks and Hospitals. For sanitary work generally it is essential that the processes of glazing pottery should be thoroughly understood, and as it would seem to be hopeless to expect anyone in India to possess the required technical knowledge, I feel assured that the most satisfactory results would accrue if a competent person was selected and sent out to India under a definite engagement for a term of years to found a school of

of pottery. I think also it would be highly desirable that a few practical workmen should be brought either from England or China to superintend the works established in various localities.

7. There is one very remarkable fact that I should wish Government to consider in disposing of this question. It is that amongst the great bulk of the population of Southern India, common white earthenware bowls and basins are rapidly superseding the old fashionable plates of sewn leaves which formerly all classes used when eating.

8. On journeying across the Tanjore District lately, my attention was particularly struck by the numbers of shops and bazars in which coarse China and English made earthenware bowls were exposed for sale. Frequently, along the road sides, on festival or market days, the dealers would have their articles displayed in great profusion. On enquiry I learnt that the trade lay chiefly with Singapore, to which free port both China and English ware is largely shipped and brought away by native craft

46+
craft trading between the straits and over Southern ports.

A good sized basin holding from 2 to 3 pints can be bought in the Tanjore District from four to five annas and the smaller sized at lower rates. In Trichinopoly and on the western coast the trade in this earthenware is, I imagine, rapidly increasing. All classes of Sudras, Christians, and the lower castes prefer eating from these bowls and estimate them to be cheaper, and more cleanly than a number of banyan leaves stitched together as a temporary plate.

Brahmins I am informed still adhere to the leaf plates (fearing probably the possibility of pollution) and are about the only people who do not adopt English or China made earthenware as their food utensils.

9. I have no statistics at hand showing what the development of the Indian trade in coarse China and English ware may be; but I feel certain that the demand for such articles is extending coincidently with the wealth and civilization of the people. It becomes therefore a very

very important question whether the dependence of the millions of India for articles of household necessity shall, or shall not be left entirely to foreign markets, while the soils of India yield in abundance the materials, which in educated hands might be made to supply in part, if not wholly, the requirements of this vast country. If the people are beginning to appreciate the more perfect forms of earthenware vessels, that have resulted from improvements in the potters' art, I would submit that some efforts might well be bestowed upon the technical education of the potters of this country so as to enable them to keep pace in some degree with the artisans of other countries.

10. I trust to be excused mentioning that the potters' art in Great Britain until comparatively modern times was by no means perfect. English householders before the time of Wedgwood, just a century ago, if they used earthenware at all depended for their supply chiefly on the Dutch, whose "Delft ware" was most commonly used in Europe in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries.

Improvements

7 + 8
Improvements in the art of mixing pottery materials and in the quality of ware were jealously guarded as secrets, and the knowledge confined but to a few. The modern development of the English pottery trade being not quite a century old, the circumstance, I submit, should encourage us to hope that under skilful teaching, and with the accumulated experience of other countries available for the guidance of Indian artisans, a thriving industry may in course of time be developed and the social status of the potter class greatly improved.

10. Viewing the question of pottery manufacture as a public health officer, I may be permitted to state that India wants not only glazed tubes that shall carry water or sewage free of admixture from without, but that glazed tiling for hospital floors, bath rooms, and urinals for barracks, and cheap earthenware for domestic use, would always be in

is for many months hence

I agree in thinking it very desirable to
have a private and better treatment of
brought out from England if as it
must appear the act of playing nothing
seems to be in itself brought without
such aid. I have known many very
in the matter in matter of assistance
has been done in the school of Arts &
I think in the matter of the school in this
school has been provided with many things
I must also refer to the matter of the
the remainder of the school who were for
some time in charge of the school of Arts
and the matter of the school in the school

and has a great deal of promise
some body of subjects of the nature of
that one might expect us.

2

be in demand. A new industry in fact remains to be created, and I trust I may have said enough to induce the Government to recommend to the Secretary of State for India that measures be taken to train up a school of Indian potters in the art of manufacturing coarse ware suited to the special wants of the country.

I have the honor to be
sir,

Your most obedient servant.

W. H. Cornish. F.R.C.S.
Surgical Commissioner
for Madras.

to the amount of time which he would require for service. I am very interested to compare the development of the head, which is the ~~the~~ chief element by which a man thoroughly understands the art of making, playing and putting together wine & flour as well as a teacher of drawing & can only be successful doing so by consideration of economy, but I think in my judgment the labor and expense the business state to engage a superior household father as a teacher. I don't think it would be superior to procure any ordinary workman or similar articles in order to represent what the kind of

Hunter caught at least.
 The Hunter has made great fine birds,
 ties, ones with artistic unplanned
 and he has also made some elegant
 in three or four different colors
 but I am not confident of the
 strength or durability of the dye.
 I should like that these ties can
 be effectively used as a form
 in average use with the present
 time. - I have directed such
 I am to be laid at the Haverhill
 Country. We can be made to
 know, in my mind, that the
 Hunter requires practical & high-class
 when done in the better and that
 the artist should be the industry
 of the town, in which much
 depends in a country and I

Public Department

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following letter from the
Sanitary Commissioner for Madras.

(Dated 2nd November 1870 No. 981.)

Order thereon 29 Novr 1870 No. 1539.

Before passing final orders on the recommendation contained in the letter above recorded, His Excellency in Council resolves to furnish a copy of it to Dr. Hunter, the Superintendent of the School of Arts, and to request him to submit a report upon the progress that has, up to the present date, been made by the School of Arts in the art of glazing and firing pottery. Especially as regards tiles and pipes required for Conservancy purposes.

2. Dr. Hunter will describe the difficulties which have been met with in this branch of pottery and the amount of assistance from England

Public 1870 Sept 10

The Sanitary Commissioner for Madras

The Chief Secretary to Government

Public Department
Fort St. George

Dated 2nd Novr 1870
Received }
Sanitary Commissioner
1870

No. 981

Submits observations on the pottery
act in India and recommends for
favourable consideration that
measures may be adopted to im-
prove the art by the employment
of men qualified from England
to teach the art of glazing and
firing pottery.

I was under the impression
that pottery was one of the
"lost" talents and was
successfully taught by Dr.
Hunter. I think we had
better when the letter came
for his observations - enquiring
at the same time what his
school is doing and how
true in the line. L. B. J.
I am in position to answer the question
I am in position to answer the question
of arts particularly with reference

Wm. H. Miller

Cont. of 1870 } **Quarries.**

To *Wm. H. Miller*
the day foundry
ten

Dated *Nov 22* 1870 }
Recd. *Nov 22* 1870, No. 1539.

Nos. 149. 150.

To the Sup. of State & Co. of
Tennessee for the purpose
of a letter from the
the subject of the Act of
Glaring and firing pottery.