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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	1097	Press
		Mis.
Dated	19-7-	1877

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 188. Read the following letter from the Commissioner of the Neilgherry Hills, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Ootacamund, 3rd July 1871, No. 57:—

I have the honour to acknowledge Proceedings of Government, No. 92, Public Department, 14th June 1871, calling upon me to report what can be done to procure a collection* of arms, ornaments, dresses, manufactures, &c., that will serve to illustrate the habits and modes of life of the jungle tribes of the Neilgherries, as well as a collection of objects found in ancient cairns and burial places—and to state the probable cost.

2. I am glad the matter is receiving attention late in the day as it is, for year by year the Neilgherry tribes at any rate are abandoning their distinctive customs. For example, among the Todas infanticide has been put a stop to; Polyandry is on the decline; their buffalo sacrifices at the dry funeral are curtailed and create comparatively little interest. Some few of the rising generation take service on plantations, and one or two have even asked for a school. With all the tribes I believe drink and disease are on the increase. Amongst a people in so low a state of civilization a very few years serve to efface all trace of a custom that has been given up. Whilst a careful examination into their existing condition and habits affords the only hope of arriving at their origin and past history.

3. I am afraid that the time has passed for making a complete collection of the objects contained in the Neilgherry cairns and cromlechs. Most of them have been opened by private individuals and their contents are now dispersed far and wide.

Mr. Metz, however, who takes great interest in Neilgherry antiquities, has promised me his assistance. He knows of some cairns and cromlechs still unopened, and some of the latter are built of stones ornamented with sculptures, of which copies ought to be made.

4. Considering the interest excited and the speculations that have been advanced with regard to the history of the Neilgherry tribes especially the Todas, it seems to me desirable that the present inquiry under the auspices of Government should be as exhaustive as possible. I propose, therefore, if approved to pursue

the following course with each of the four† Neilgherry jungle tribes, viz.:—

The Todas.

The Kotas.

The Kurnubers.

The Irulars.

- I.—To make a collection of their dresses, weapons, implements, musical instruments, ornaments, utensils, and manufactures.
- II.—To obtain photographs or drawings of each of the tribes and of their houses.
- III.—To record all the facts I can collect with regard to their language, their present habits, ceremonies, and modes of life.
- IV.—To inquire if they have any traditions or legends illustrative of their history.

† The Badagas cannot be called an aboriginal or jungle race.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
19th July 1871.*

V.—To collect objects that I may find in cairns, cromlechs, barrows, and stone circles still existing.

VI.—To obtain drawings of all ancient sculptures to be found on the hills.

5. It is impossible to say what the probable cost may be, but I think a 1,000 Rupees would be ample.

6. I cannot promise any satisfactory results under at least a year.

No. 169.

ORDER THEREON, 19th July 1871, No. 1097.

The Government entirely approve the Commissioner's proposals, and beg him to take steps at once towards carrying them out. For the present he is authorized to incur expenditure not exceeding Rupees 1,000 for the purpose, and will report when further funds are required.

2. The Commissioner's attention is directed to the records of previous labours in this field which will be found in the Journal of the Madras Literary Society and probably in those of the Asiatic Society.

(True Extract.)

To the Commissioner of the Neilgherry Hills.
" Acting Accountant-General.

Govt. of 1871 Madras

PUBLIC.

To
THE COMMISSIONER OF THE
NEIGHERRY HILLS
&c., &c.

Dated July, 1871.

Recd.

Recd.

G. O., 19th July 1871, No. 1687.

JULY.

Nos. 168-169.

Authorizing the Commissioner of the Neigherry Hills to carry out his proposals respecting the mode of collecting arms, ornaments, &c., for the cutta and Madras Museum, and to incur expenditure not exceeding Rupees 1,000 for purpose.

By order the Neigherry Hills &c.

Commissioners office
Ootacamund 3rd July 1871

3+

No 57

From

J. H. Brooks Esqr.

Commissioner Nilgerry

To

The Chief Secretary to Government
Madras.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge

Proceedings of Government No. 92 Public
Department 14. June 1871 calling upon me
to report what can be done to procure

One collection
for the Calcutta
Museum
one for the
Madras Central
Museum.

a collection of Arms, ornaments, dresses,
Manufactures &c. that will serve to illu-
strate the habits and modes of life of
the jungle tribes of the Nilgherries as well
as a collection of objects found in ancient
Cairns and burial places - and to state
the probable cost.

I am glad the matter is receiving
attention late in the day as it is, for year
by year the Nilgherry tribes at any rate

by abandoning their distinctive customs.
For example among the Todas Infanticide
has been put a stop to: Polyandry is on the
decline: their buffalo sacrifices at the
dry funeral are curtailed and create "interesting" ^{W. L. H. H.} ^{continued?} ^{continued?}
Comparatively little interest: some few
of the rising generation take service on
plantations and one or two have even
asked for a school. With all the tribes
I believe drink and disease are on the
increase. Amongst a people in so low
a state of civilization a very few years
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that has been given up. Whilst a careful
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and habits affords the only hope of arriving
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collection of the objects contained in the
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of them have been opened by private indi-
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4. Considering the interest excited
and the speculations that have been
advanced with regards to the history
of the Nilgherry Tribes especially the
Todas, it seems to me desirable that
the present enquiry under the auspices of
~~the Government should be continued~~
possible. I propose therefore if approved
to pursue the following course with each
of the four Nilgherry jungle tribes viz.

The Todas
The Kotas
The Kurumbas
~~The Vattas~~

I To make a collection of their dresses
weapons, implements, musical instruments,
ornaments, utensils and manufactures.

II To obtain photographs or drawings
of each of the tribes and of their houses.

* The Todas
cannot be
called an
aboriginal or
jungle race.

1. To record all the facts I can collect with regard to their language, their present habits, ceremonies, and modes of life.

2. To inquire if they have any traditions or legends illustrative of their history.

3. To collect objects that I may find in caves, crannocks, barrows and stone circles still existing.

4. To obtain drawings of all ancient sculptures to be found on the Hills.

5. It is impossible to say what the probable cost may be but I think a ~~few~~ ^{few} would be ample.

I cannot promise any satisfactory results under at least a year.

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your most obedient servant

W. Morris

Cambridge

Y. G. 2

Gort. of {1871} Madras.

Public

To
The *Commissioner of the*
Madras District

Dated *July 1st*

Recd.

Encl.

G. O. *1871*, 1871, *1871*

Respecting the (min.) of the
Madras District, to be
proposed by the
mode of collecting and
remuneration, to be from the
Salaries and Madras
Revenue, to be an
expenditure not exceeding Rs.
1000 for the purpose.