

1. Date of repair. 2. Initials of Reference. 3. Date of issue. 4. Date of receipt.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.

894

Press
Mis.

Dated

21-6

19 1871

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,

21st June 1871.

No. 186. Read the following letter from the Acting Superintending Engineer, 8th Division, to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, Fort St. George, dated Madura, 8th June 1871, No. 764:—

I have the honour to state that, on the 3rd instant, I forwarded by the Carrying

Enclosure 1.
One Carrying Company's receipt.

Company two bottles filled with waker taken by me in presence of the Collector of the District from the Teppoo-colum, or tank, situated in the enclosure of the

Minatchi Pagoda at Madura, and to request that the water may be analyzed by the Chemical Examiner to the Government, with a view to a comparison of its ingredients being made with those of ordinary pure water, and the result published hereafter for general information in this district.

2. It is almost sickening to think, and still more to have to write, that this water in which 200 people, on an average, bathe and wash their clothes twice a day, and have done so for several hundred years past, and which for the whole of that time has never been emptied, or cleaned out, is still used for culinary purposes.

3. When the stomach feels overloaded, a draught of this water is said to have a beneficial effect as a mild laxative. And *dholl*, which constitutes the principal food of a great number of natives, is habitually soaked in this water before cooking in order to give the grain an agreeable taste!

4. The tank is filled partly by the rain that falls within the area of the temple, but principally by springs. The water was originally so sweet as to be called "the golden lotus water." And it has been ever considered an act of devotion to bathe and purify one's self in this holy tank.

5. It appears strange how a people like the Hindoos, whose cleanliness is a part of their religion, should allow their minds to be so warped and prejudiced as to believe that to wade in this disgusting compound can be considered a cleanly operation, or be acceptable to God as an act of devotion. And it is too horrible to think that this fetid fluid, which a village hog, filthy as are his habits, would only drink by compulsion, *i.e.*, inability to slake his thirst in any other manner, is prized for household purposes by sentient human beings.

6. It is this prejudice which prevents the Devasthanum people, under whose sole management the tank is, from moving in the matter of its purification, unless compelled to do so by direct order of Government, and I trust, therefore, that, on sanitary grounds, the Government will be pleased to issue instructions to that effect.

7. It is well known that, in this densely crowded town of Madura, cholera makes its appearance regularly twice a year—once in the cold season and again in April, during the Chittaray festival. On this latter occasion a vast number of people from all parts of the country flock into Madura, and the greater proportion of these proceed to purify themselves in this tank before presenting their offering to the Deity; and those that come after them have the benefit of any cholera taint that the water may have thus acquired, and how can it be wondered at that the disease spreads on this occasion, as it does, on all sides, like wild fire.

8. The depth of water, if this emerald mixture may be called such, is eleven feet in the middle of the tank, and there is a certain amount of difficulty attending the emptying of the same, as the surplus outlet of the tank leads to a second tank.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
21st June 1871.*

There can be no doubt but that this difficulty has been the main cause of the tank having got into such a disgusting state. I have carefully examined the surplus outlet, and I feel satisfied that the tank cannot be satisfactorily emptied through it, as the levels are not conducive for that purpose. It is quite possible, however, to lift the water to an aperture in the wall surrounding the tank, and thus lead it through the ordinary drainage of the pagoda area.

9. The Manager of the Devasthanum funds, Venkatasawmy Naidoo, tells me that he himself is quite prepared to carry out this suggestion, but that he is powerless to act in the matter, because, as the members of the Devasthanum Committee do not themselves see anything particularly objectionable in the tank itself, they would not give their consent to an arrangement for which they perceive no necessity; but that, if the Government be pleased to give an order to the effect, the Committee will then be compelled to put their tank into a sanitary state.

10. The Collector tells me that he has no authority to move in the matter, and the Municipal Commissioners are equally without any control over the temple sanitation. And thus it turns out that the tank remains as it is, in spite of its being stigmatized by the Sanitary Commissioner to Government as "a most dangerous nuisance," and of his recommendation that the "temple authorities ought certainly to be called upon to empty and clean out this foul reservoir."—*Vide* annexed extract, paragraph 17, of Doctor Cornish's letter to the Madura Municipality under date 3rd October 1870, No. 39.

11. I cannot believe that the Government have allowed the complete lapse of that authoritative interference with the sanitary arrangements of pagodas which, for so many years, they held to the manifest good of the people; but I cling to the hope that they have reserved to themselves for occasions of an aggravated nature such as that under notice, some means of compelling the Pagoda Committee to attend to the instructions of Government in matters of sanitation, which, if left neglected, may most seriously affect the health and lives of a large body of people, for whose protection, in this respect, the Government are directly responsible.

12. The present time is very suitable for the prosecution of this work, as the tank, if now emptied, would soon re-fill; and, considering the very great urgency there is of immediate action in this matter, I trust that I shall be excused for bringing the subject thus prominently to the notice of Government.

EXTRACT from a letter from the Sanitary Commissioner for Madras, to the Madura Municipality, No. 39, dated 3rd October 1870.

Paragraph 17. *Pagoda Tank*.—Although the Municipal Commissioners have no control over the temples, I may remark that the foul water in the sacred tank of the pagoda is a most dangerous nuisance, considering that devotees actually bathe in and drink of the abominable stuff. A specimen I examined was nearly as thick as pea-soup from a green vegetable growth and numberless infusoria, and it stank abominably. The quantity of putrifiable organic matter in it was so great that I was unable to determine it by the permanganate of potash test. The temple authorities ought certainly to be called upon to empty and clean out this foul reservoir, considering the estimation in which the water is held by all orthodox Hindoos and the risk they run in drinking from such a source.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
21st June 1871.*

Transferred to the Public Department.

FORT ST. GEORGE,
14th June 1871.

(Signed) J. CARPENDALE, Colonel, R.E.,
Secy. to Govt., P. W. D.

No. 187. ORDER THEREON, 21st June 1871, No. 894.

Communicated to the Acting Magistrate of Madura.

2. As from the description given of the tank by the Acting Superintending Engineer, and in the extract from the Sanitary Commissioner's letter, there can be no doubt that the tank, in its present condition, is a dangerous public nuisance and calculated to induce disease among pilgrims who may propagate it all over the country, Mr. McQuhæ will call on the Temple Trustees to take immediate steps for emptying and cleaning out the tank preparatory to its re-filling, and will report the result.

3. The Acting Superintending Engineer will afford the Trustees the benefit of his professional advice in the matter.

(True Extract.)

Acting Chief Secretary.

To the Public Works Department.

.. Acting Magistrate of Madura.
.. Sanitary Commissioner.

Exd. J. Wright.

No. 764
Minatchi Pagoda water

Madura.
8th June 1871

From

Lieut. Col. A. Roberts R.E.
Adj. Superinty. Engineer 8th Div.

To

Colonel J. Harpendale R.E.
Secretary to Government 8th Div.

Sir,

I have the honor to state
that on the 3rd Instant I forwarded
1 Carrying by the carrying company 2 bottles
Company filled with water taken by me
receipts in presence of the collector of the
District from the Teppoo-colum for
tank situated in the enclosure
of the Minatchi pagoda at Madura
and to request that the water may
be analyzed by the Chemical
Examiner to the Government, with
a view to a comparison of its
ingredients being made with those
of ordinary pure water, and the
result published hereafter for
general information in this District.

Govt of 1871

PUBLIC.

To
THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT,
&c., &c.,

Dated June, 21st.

Recd.

G. O., 21st June 1871, No. 894.

Recd.

JUNE.
Nos. 186-187.

Directing the Acting Magistrate of Madura to call
on the Trustees of the Minatchi Pagoda to take
immediate steps for emptying and cleaning out the
tank situated in the enclosure of this temple prepa-
ratory to its re-filling, and to report the result to
Government.

2 It is almost sickening to think, and still more to have to write, that this water in which 200 people, on an average, bathe and wash their clothes twice a day and have done so for several hundred years past, and which for the whole of that time has never been emptied, or cleaned out, is still used for culinary purposes.

3 When the stomach feels overloaded a draught of this water is said to have a beneficial effect, as a mild laxative. And dhol, which constitutes the principal food of a great number of Natives, is habitually soaked in this water, before cooking in order to give the grain an agreeable taste!

4 The tank is filled partly by the rain that falls within the area of the temple but principally by springs. The water was originally so sweet as to be called "the golden Lotus water." And it

has been ever considered an act of devotion to bathe and purify ones self in this holy tank.

5 It appears strange how people like the Hindoos, whose cleanliness is a part of their religion, should allow their minds to be so warped and prejudiced as to believe that to wade in this disgusting compound can be considered a cleanly operation, or be acceptable to God as an act of devotion. And it is too horrible to think that this fetid fluid, which a village hog, - filthy as are his habits, - would only drink by compulsion, i.e. inability to slake his thirst in any other manner, is prized for household purposes by sentient human beings.

6 It is this prejudice which prevents the Devasthanam people, under whose sole management the tank is, from moving

in the matter of its purification, unless compelled to do so by direct order of Government; and I trust therefore that on sanitary grounds the Government will be pleased to issue instructions to that effect.

7. It is well known that in this densely crowded Town of Madura, cholera makes its appearance regularly twice a year: once in the cold season and again in April, during the G.uttaray festival. - on this latter occasion a vast number of people from all parts of the country flock into Madura, and the greater proportion of these proceed to purify themselves in this tank, before presenting their offering to the Deity; and those that come after them have the benefit of any cholera taint that the water may have thus acquired, and how can it be wondered at that

the disease spreads on this occasion, as it does, on all sides, like wild fire.

8. The depth of water, if this emerald mixture may be called such, is 11 feet in the middle of the tank, and there is a certain amount of difficulty attending the emptying of the same, as the surplus outlet of the tank leads to a second tank. There can be no doubt but that this difficulty has been the main cause of the tank having got into such a disgusting state. I have carefully examined the surplus out-let, and I feel satisfied that the tank cannot be satisfactorily emptied through it, as the levels are not conducive for that purpose. It is quite possible, however, to lift the water to an aperture in the wall surrounding the tank, and thus lead it through

the ordinary drainage of the
Pagoda area

9. The Manager of the
Devasthanam funds, Venkatasaw
my Naido, tells me that he
himself is quite prepared to
carry out this suggestion, but
that he is powerless to act
in the matter, because, as the
members of the Devasthanam
Committee do not themselves
see anything particularly objection-
able in the tank itself, they
would not give their consent
to an arrangement for which
they perceive no necessity; but
that if the Government be pleased
to give an order to the effect, the
Committee will then be compelled
to put their tank into a sani-
tary state.

10. The Collector tells me
that he has no authority to move
in the matter, and the Muni-
cipal Commissioners are equally

without any control over the temple
sanitation. And thus it turns
out that the tank remains
as it is, in spite of its being
stigmatized by the Sanitary
Commissioner to Government as
"a most dangerous nuisance", and
of his recommendation that the
"temple authorities ought certainly
to be called upon to empty and
clean out this foul reservoir - vide"
annexed extract, para 17, of Doctor
Cornish's letter to the Madras
Municipality under date 3rd October
1890 No 39.

11. I cannot believe that
the Government have allowed
the complete lapse of that authori-
tative interference with the
sanitary arrangements of Pagoda
which for so many years they
held to the manifest good of
the people; but I cling to the
hope that they have reserved
to themselves for occasions of

an aggravated nature such as
that under notice, some means
of compelling the Pagoda
Committee to attend to the
instructions of Government in
matters of sanitation, which,
if left neglected, may most
seriously affect the health
and lives of a large body
of people, for whose protection
in this respect, the Government
are directly responsible.

121. The present time is
very suitable for the prosecution
of this work, as the tank, if
now emptied, would soon re-fill,
and considering the very great
urgency there is of immediate
action in this matter, I trust
that I shall be excused for bringing
the subject thus prominently to the
notice of Government.

I have the honor to be
Sir
your Most Obedient Servt.
Richd Roberts Cicut. Col. 106
Ag. Superintg. Engineer & Dr. En. tank

13
Extract from a letter from the
Sanitary Commissioner for Madras
to the Madura Municipality
No. 39 dated 3rd October 1870.

Pagoda Tank Para 17. Although the Muni:
cipal Commissioners have no
control over the Temples, I may
remark that the foul water in
the sacred tank of the Pagoda
is a most dangerous nuisance,
considering that devotees actually
bathe in and drink of the
abominable stuff. A specimen
I examined was nearly as thick
as pea-soup from a green
vegetable growth and numberless
infusoria and it stank abominably.
The quantity of putrefiable orga:
nic matter in it was so great
that I was unable to determine
it by the permanganate of
potash test. The temple authorities
ought certainly to be called
upon to empty and clean
out this foul reservoir, considering

the estimation in which the
water is held by all orthodox
Hindoo and the risk they run
in drinking from such a source.

I have &c.

Signed, W. Cornish I.C.B.S.
Sanitary Commissioner for
Madras.

Recd. P. R. R. Lieut. Col. R. E.
Asy. Superintg. Engineer S. D. R.

1891 Definitive
from 27-2.6.86
The 1st July 1891
to 27/7/86

The Secretary to
the Government of
the 1st July 1891

dated 8th June 1891

Received 22nd June 1891

No. 1244 Enelo-1891

It is to be noted that the water in a deep pool in the immediate foreground at the entrance to the beach is affected by the presence of the people & requires that steps may be taken to empty the pool & return sand & stones to it out -

Transferred to the
Public Department.

Mr. 1244 Enelo-1891

copy to Court
P. H. S.

14th June 1891.

186.

Transferred

Encl: 1 Java letter
from the Sup^y Engr
now to the Secretary
to Govt. DOW dated
8 June 1871 to 764

P.M. 2686/70

P.G. J/21 June/71
In B. 186.

Camping Kohamp
Receipt.

P. 187. D
In 1244

(22)

MADRAS CARRYING COMPANY.

(Parcels Receipt Note.)

No. 44 Madura Agency 3rd June 1871

RECEIVED from Shri S. Srinivas for
transmission to Madura Parcel

addressed to The Secretary of Government

Charges Rs. 5 "12" 5 PM.

Parcel at Madura
13th June 1871
S. R. Rangaiah agent

8/21

Public Department.

PROCEEDINGS of the MARDAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following letter from
the Acting Superintending
Engineer of the Division
dated 8th June 1871 No. 764.

Order thereon No. 894 - 21 June/71

Communicated to the
Acting Magistrate of Badama.
2 - As from the de-
-scription given of the
Tank by the Acting Super-
-intending Engineer, and
in the extract from the
Sanitary Commissioners
letter, there can be no
doubt that the tank,
in its present condition,
is a dangerous public
nuisance and calculated to
induce disease among
pilgrims who may
propagate it all over
the country, Mr. McQuhae
will

LOS

will call on the Temple
Trustees to take immediate
steps for emptying and
cleaning out the tank
preparatory to its refilling
and will report the re-
sult.

The Acting Superinten-
ding Engineer will afford
the Trustees the benefit
of his professional advice
in the matter.

L.B.

The R. W. Dept. a.
" Dept. of Madras }
" Sanitary Com. b

29/

556 110

Boat. of 1871 } *Boat.*

To *Public*

The Public Book Bp.

Dated June 21. } 1871, No. 894.
Recd. *1871*

Nos. 1871

Directing the *Boat*: of
Boat to call on the
Boat of the *Boat*.
Boat to take immediate
steps for *Boat* and
clearing out the *Boat*
stated in the *Boat*
of *Boat* to the *Boat*,
preparing to *Boat*
and to report the result
to *Boat*.

15.37.