[T. / 1]
400—19-12-06.

~~CONFIDENTIAL,~~

Government of Madras.

Public ~~Financial~~ (1887) Department.

ORDINARY MIS. (Printed — see spare copy stitched at the end).

G.O., No. 1346-7

DATED 16-9-1887

[Despatch Abstract.]

Move of Govt. to the Hills:—

Forwarding to the G. of I. a report regarding the administrative aspects of the annual migration of the Govt. of Madras to the Nilgiris.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

When given for copying ____
When copied ____ 190
When examined ____
When signed ____

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21 JUL 1910
MADRAS GOVT.

Printed in Sp. Copy attached at end.

No. 14 (Public), dated India Office, London, the 20th January 1887.

From—Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India,
To—His Excellency the Right Honourable the Governor General of India in Council.

As your Excellency in Council is no doubt aware, the question of the annual migration of the Government of India to Simla has, on several occasions, recently been brought under notice in Parliament, and has, moreover, attracted a considerable amount of public attention, both in this country and in India. The matter has from time to time been discussed in correspondence between the Government of India and the Secretary of State. But it has never been dealt with conclusively: and it appears to me desirable, for various reasons, that the whole subject should now be fully and carefully considered with a view to determining if possible whether the objections urged against the present practice of the Government of India have any substantial foundation, and, if they have, how far that practice should be modified.

2. The migration of the Government of India to Simla, as at present understood, may be said to date from 1864, when Sir John Lawrence became Governor General. Prior to that date, the Governor General, in his visits to the interior, was unaccompanied by his Council, the Members of which remained in Calcutta,—where the President in Council exercised the full powers of the Governor General in Council, though the Governor General himself exercised simultaneously (but, no doubt, subject to arrangements with the President which prevented any inconvenient clashing of authority) similar powers, though separated from his Council. That system had the great advantage, the absence of which is one of the principal objections commonly urged against the present system, that the public offices of the Supreme Government were fixed and open all the year round in Calcutta. In the opinion, however, of many of the authorities an arrangement under which it was possible for the Governor General to be separated for an indefinite period from his Council was very objectionable. It was alleged to be costly, uncertain, fraught with delay to the transaction of public business, and unsuited to exigencies calling for prompt decision. For these and other reasons it was abandoned by Sir John Lawrence, who introduced the practice of taking his Executive Council with him to Simla. In adopting this course, he acted with the approval of the Members of his Council, and also, no doubt, in accordance, to a certain extent, with the intention indicated by Parliament in enacting the Indian Councils Act of 1861, which clearly contemplated the possibility of the Members of the Council being summoned to meet at places other than Calcutta.

3. The merits of the system thus introduced were discussed in correspondence which took place between the Government of India and the Secretary of State in 1868, as to the administration of Bengal, and incidentally as to the continuance of Calcutta as the Capital of India. In his Despatch of the 16th of January 1868, Public, No. 10, Sir Stafford Northcote said (paragraphs 6 to 8):—

> Calcutta is now the recognized Capital of India, but in practice it is the seat of the Supreme Government for only half the year, for the Governor General has recently abandoned the custom of paying cursory visits as formerly to other parts of Her Majesty's dominions in India, leaving the Council under its President at Calcutta, and has substituted that of taking his Council with him to Simla, which has now become almost an alternative metropolis.
>
> It is alleged by some that serious inconveniences have been the results of the establishment of this system, though others have pointed out advantages which are said to more than counterbalance them, and have argued that the present plan is decidedly superior to that for which it has been substituted. Upon this question I do not desire now to express any opinion.
>
> . . . .
>
> The alternatives for it would appear to be these. Either that Calcutta should remain the Capital of India, and that the Council should have its stationary head-quarters there, leaving the Governor General at liberty to visit other parts of India, either alone or with a selected number of his Council, . . . or that some new capital should be fixed on; or, lastly, that provision should be made for enabling the Governor General in Council to establish himself from time to time in such places, and for such periods, as he may consider

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the exigencies of his vast dominion to require. Upon this important question I desire to receive your advice, and I request that you will consider it as well from an Imperial point of view and in its bearing on the general government of India, as in relation to the effect it has upon the more limited question of the proper form of government for Bengal.

4. In reply to the despatch from which these paragraphs are quoted, the Government of India forwarded* Minutes by the Governor General and the various Members of his Council. In so far as these Minutes dealt with the question now under consideration, they showed, with certain minor differences, a consensus of opinion upon two points,—namely, that it was not necessary or desirable that the Governor General should remain throughout the year at Calcutta, and that, in his absences from the Capital, the Governor General ought ordinarily to be accompanied by his Council. On both these points the opinion of Sir John Lawrence was most decided, though he recommended that Calcutta should still be the seat of the Government of India. In his Minute of the 19th of February 1868 he said, paragraph 30: "But, while recommending that the seat of the Government of India should remain at Calcutta, "I should be quite averse to any proposal for fixing it there all the year round. "Such a plan would grievously weaken the Government of India, and deprive "it of the best means of learning its duty, and of understanding the country "and people under its charge. It is essential that the Governor General should "be able to move about the interior of India, and this has always been done "by every person who has held that office. . . . . In moments of urgency "the Governor General can move alone; but in ordinary times when he moves "it is most desirable that he should be accompanied by his Council. It is "in this way that the duties of the Government can best be discharged." It appeared to him, moreover, that in regard to political as well as climatic conditions, Simla was the most convenient place of residence for the Governor General during the greater part of his absence from Calcutta, but that these conditions might vary, and that it might at any time be convenient that the Government of India should move temporarily to other places besides Simla, for example, to Ootacamund in the Madras Presidency, or to Poona in the Bombay Presidency.

* See Public letter, dated 28th March 1868, No. 50.

5. That correspondence did not result in the issue of any orders by the Secretary of State on the migration of the Government to Simla. In January 1876, however, a further correspondence arose regarding it, on a proposal made by the Governor General in Council that Simla should be formally recognized as the summer residence of the Government,—the special object in view being to obtain permission to carry out certain sanitary improvements much needed in that station. It was pointed out that further experience had served to confirm the views expressed by Lord Lawrence in 1868, that whenever there were no special reasons to call for the presence of the Governor General and his Council at Calcutta or elsewhere, there was no station where the business of Government could, on the whole, be better transacted than at Simla.

6. Lord Salisbury sanctioned† the expenditure for sanitary improvements asked for, but said that he had no intention of consenting that Simla should be constituted an alternative Capital, or that the Governor General or his Council should reside there when special reasons called for their presence elsewhere. His Lordship further gave prominence to the important bearing of the prolonged residence of the Government in the Hills on the effectual carrying out of the policy of the Indian Councils Act relative to the attendance of the non-official Additional Members at the deliberations of the Legislative Council; and while admitting that certain very urgent or special legislation, and the executive preparation of legislative measures, might properly be carried on at Simla, he enquired whether the Government of India saw any difficulty in an understanding, to be adhered to, save in exceptional cases, that their regular legislative sittings should be held at Calcutta only.

† Public Despatch, dated 25th May 1876, No. 64.

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7. In a further Despatch of the 20th of December 1877, Legislative, No. 68, the Marquis of Salisbury reverted to the same important subject, saying,— "Any method of transacting legislative business which, in respect of place or time, unnecessarily discourages or prevents the attendance of these (the "non-official Additional) Members must be condemned as defeating the plain "intention of the Imperial Legislature. But under the present practice of "the Government of India, there is only one place at which and only one "period of the year during which the systematic attendance of Additional "Members can be secured. As a rule, the mercantile gentlemen summoned to "your Council can attend it at Calcutta alone; and since the extension of railways, Calcutta is probably, on the whole, the place at which it is most convenient for Native gentlemen of rank to assist in your deliberations . . . . "Under these circumstances I am of opinion that Your Excellency will best "give effect to the important statute from which so large a portion of your "power is derived, by making such arrangements as will admit of your Executive Government being, as a rule, represented at Calcutta during the whole "period between the 1st day of November and the 15th day of April."

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8. It is not necessary for me to enter further into the correspondence which has taken place in various departments on matters connected with this subject. It may be gathered generally from that correspondence that while the Secretary of State has declined to regard Simla as an alternative Capital, and has all along endeavoured to curtail expenditure upon it, and to limit, as far as possible, the residence of the Government of India there, Simla has, nevertheless, approached nearer and nearer to being the permanent and real headquarters of the Government of India.

9. The question is one of very great importance in many respects besides its bearing on the legislative work of the Council, to which Lord Salisbury's remarks quoted above were specially directed. And, agreeing as I do in all His Lordship then said, I much regret to observe, from the return forwarded with Your Lordship's Financial Despatch of the 3rd February 1885, that the orders contained in the Despatch of the 20th of December 1877 have not produced the effect that was desired in curtailing the periods of the absence of the Supreme Government from Calcutta. It appears to me also that the whole of the existing practice, under which the complete machinery of the Government of India is removed for the greater part of the year from Calcutta to a station remote and not easily accessible, requires to be most carefully examined and reconsidered.

10. It is unnecessary for me to dwell on the more general objections commonly urged against the system, such as the loss to the ruling authorities themselves of all that is gained by contact with public opinion, the periodical dislocation of the business of Government, the waste of time of subordinates, and occasionally the great inconvenience to the public. These considerations will, no doubt, receive Your Lordship's careful attention. Another important objection which has been raised to the system is its cost to the public revenues. It appears from the returns furnished by Your Lordship's Government early in 1885 that the cost is large and shows, on the whole, a tendency to increase,—the increase from 1879-80 to 1883-84 being not far from a lac of rupees. I am of opinion that Your Lordship should report to me your views on the whole subject, bearing in mind that serious doubts have been expressed as to the necessity of the Governor General having his Council at Simla, and of all the Government officers being temporarily transferred to that station every year.

11. My observations apply to some extent also to the annual migrations of the Local Governments: and as to these migrations I request that Your Excellency in Council will cause the fullest enquiry to be made. The subject, as a whole, is a large one, and I shall be glad to receive, as early as possible, an expression of your views upon it.

G. C. Press, Simla.—No. 715 H. D.—1-8-87.—40.

9/8/87

4

[CONFIDENTIAL.]

Printed in sp. copy of 88 attached at end

No. 30/1712.

FROM

A. P. MACDONNELL, ESQ.,
Secretary to the Government of India,

TO

The Chief Secy: to the Govt: of
Madras.

Home Department.
Public.

Simla, the 1st August 1887.

SIR,

I AM directed to forward the accompanying copy of a Despatch* from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India on the subject of the periodic removal of the Government of India to Simla, and to invite the special attention of His Excellency the Governor in Council to paragraphs 10 and 11 of the Despatch.

* No. 14 (Public), dated 20th January 1887.

paras 1-3 ante

2. The Governor General in Council will be glad to be favoured as soon as possible with a full report on the administrative aspects of this question, so far as the annual migration of His Excy. in Council to a hill station is concerned. The report now called for should be in continuation of, and regarded as supplementary to, the report which has been called for by the Financial Department of the Government of India in its No. 3831, dated 23d Octr 1886, which refers only to the financial aspects of the case.

prev. G.O. 1319 Fin., 8.12.86.

3. The Despatch from the Secretary of State should be treated as *confidential.*

I have the honour to be,
SIR,
Your most obedient Servant,
A. P. MacDonnell
Secretary to the Government of India.

G. C. Press, Simla.—No. 713 H. D.—1-8-87.—316.

2 Spare copies of letter and encls. enclosed

Circulate

For orders as to the lines on which the reply is to proceed. Attention is requested to the despatch of Mr Adams' Government. No. 8 of 4th March/81.

H.E.

Order 16 Sep/87 No. 1346.

The following letter will be addressed to the Govt. of India

H.E.

No.

5/

CURRENT NO. 3379.

Public (1887) Department

From

The Government of India

Home department

No. $\frac{30}{1712}$

Dd 1st
Rd 9th } August 1887

One Enclosure

Subject

Periodic removal of the Govt. of Madras to the hills.

Confidential

Notes

~~From the Govt. of India~~ (Home dept.) No. 30-1712 d/ 1-8-87

Public C. 3379

[Subject:- Move of Govt. to the Hills]

Public dept. 6

/ SP

For orders as to the lines on which the reply is to proceed. Attention is requested to the Despatch of Mr Adams' Govt. No 8 ~~of~~ of 4th March 1881.

H. E. Stokes

We are asked for a report on the effects on the administration of the annual removal of Govt. from Madras to Ootacamund.

I presume the reference is confined to the Civil administration. The fixing of Military headquarters on the hills is an entirely different question. But it is useful to refer to it because I believe it was one of the chief grounds for the agitation raised in 1884. Men found the C. in C. located here permanently and the Govt. erecting substantial offices & gradually prolonging their stay. They naturally thought it high time to cry out, lest the permanent removal of Govt. should also become an accomplished fact.

To understand the matter aright the position of Govt. at three different stages should be contrasted. First of all before 1869. The state of things is described in the minutes of Lord Napier & Sir A. J. Arbuthnot of that year. Owing to tours and to various members leaving Madras for short periods of necessary relaxation the Council was rarely complete for more than half the year, or 7 months out of the 12, and often the whole work was devolved on two members, or even on a single member. It seemed preferable that the entire Govt. should take the necessary change together and accordingly the Secretary of State sanctioned the removal of the whole Govt. to Ootacamund for an annual term not exceeding three months. This plan was followed in the 3 or 4 years next after 1869, the annual cost being some 7000 Rs. Since then a Govt. House & Offices have been built & the period passed at Ooty has been prolonged to 6 months.

Occasionally it has even exceeded 6 months. In the Debate of 1884 Lord Napier said that it had grown to from 6 to 8 months, and the prayer of the petition which he supported was not that the sanction which had been given at his instance might be cancelled, but simply that this period might be curtailed. Lord Stanley of Alderley followed in the same strain. He thought 8 months too long: he saw nothing objectionable in the Bombay Govt's annual visits to Poonah, or even to Mahableshwar as it is only 24 hours' journey from Bombay. He seems to have thought that another month was lost in preparation & travelling.

A good deal of misapprehension prevails on this last point. I can safely assert that the time so lost within this Presy. is inappreciable. The journey from Madras to Ootacamund occupies less than a day. Timely notice is invariably published so that the Official post is delivered & taken up for disposal at Madras up to a particular date, & from the very next day at Ooty. I know that this year I was at work in Madras up to the hour of my departure, 5 P.M.,

and was quite ready for more work here the next evening; and I believe that by the following morning, but for the Easter holidays, work would have been ready for me also — in addition to what I brought with me, part of which I did in the train. Had a special train been provided, as was generally the case in Mr Grant Duff's time, we should have all reached Ooty between 10 & 11, before Office hours. Thus ~~when~~ no more than a single day at most need be lost by the members of Govt. or the Secretaries, & I fancy the same remark applies to clerks also.

And the change is now arranged so smoothly that it is equally untrue that there is any dislocation of the business of Govt. This is not the flaw of the present system but of that which prevailed before 1869, when for weeks & even months together the whole work ~~had~~ fell on two, or even on one, of the members. It has now increased to such an extent that no single man could possibly get through it, even in a perfunctory manner. The advantage sought by changing the system in 1870 was to get rid of such dislocation, and as the Govt still keep together this advantage is still maintained.

But the term 'dislocation' may be taken to cover the delay in the despatch of business caused by our absence from the Govt record room & printing Office at

Madras. Here at all events we have a considerable advantage over the intermediate system, when Govt. during its stay on the Hills was, as it were, in camp & without any records & with hardly any establishment. The Secretaries could probably tell us more about such delays as I am now contemplating. All I can say is that, speaking generally, a reference to old records is more necessary in cases which do not call for emergent disposal, and that owing to copies of most of the more modern records (printed) being kept at Ooty & to other similar arrangements, far less delay occurs now than when Govt. came up in what may be termed light marching order. When we add to this the undoubted fact that our power of work up here in the hot weather is far greater than it could be in the plains, I think we may safely say that on the whole business is expedited rather than retarded by our spending the hot weather on the hills.

Then there is the objection that by ~~leaving Madras~~ coming to Ooty we lose touch of the people & of all industries but the planting industry, and of public opinion, by wh. I suppose we are to understand the public opinion of the Presy. town. The natural & legitimate way in wh. public opinion is brought to bear on Govt. is through the medium of the public press & public meetings. Our Madras newspapers reach us here

only 20 hours later than we should see them at Madras, and they give us reports of all public meetings earlier than the proceedings cd be communicated to us in any other manner. I cannot for a moment admit that we are less solicitous here for the promotion of industries than we sd be at Madras. On the contrary an occasional absence affords a distinct advantage so far as the industries of the Presidency town are concerned. The human mind is always apt to disregard or grow callous to what is seen every day. Our annual ~~abs~~ removal & return enhance our interest in Madras matters & enable us to take a fresher & more practical view of their progress.

As for losing touch of the people — if that means the great mass of the people up country, Govt. must maintain its touch with them rather thro' its District Officers than by direct intercourse. At Ooty we see more of the District Officers than we ever should at Madras. During the months of our stay here the Judges have their recess while other Officers come on leave. Thus we have opportunities of conversing with many who could not visit Madras in the cold weather; hardly any would go there during the hot months. Apart from newspapers the only other way in wh.

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we can keep up touch with the upcountry population is by tours. The sojourn of Govt on the hills in no way interferes with the Govr's tours, & much to my regret the members of Council can no longer find leisure for such a delightful break in their monotonous & engrossing work. In his minute of 1869 Sir A. J. Arbuthnot suggested that six weeks for each member wd suffice for this purpose. I wish I cd get half that period, or even as many days, but I see no such prospect.

+ And this brings me to the main ground on wh. the periodical change to the Hills must be justified. The members of Govt must be somewhat advanced in age, and at least half have served some 30 years in an Indian climate. Even in our own bracing land an annual recess for rest & relaxation is recognized as essential for men who have much brain work. As matters stand the civilian members of Council have no respite whatever. We cannot get any leave and it wd only be by asking my colleagues to do double work – a wholly impossible task – that I could leave my papers even for a day. As far as necessary rest & relaxation went I was better off in the High Court, where I had two months' real vacation. As I can now have no rest surely I require some change of air & climate at the least.

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It seems to be considered by some that the absence of Govt from Madras is unfair to Petrs who have, or think they have, grievances to be redressed. To this there are two answers. Ooty is hardly less accessible than Madras: from some of the Districts it is more accessible. Govt do not hear oral pleadings nor require the personal attendance of memorialists: all appeals & petitions have to be put into writing.

During this hot season one or two matters have come before me connected with Madras in which I should certainly have been glad ~~to have had~~ of a personal inspection of buildings there or of a consultation with persons living there. But on the other hand in at least an equal number of matters connected with Ooty I have had that advantage, wh. I sd not have enjoyed if I had remained at Madras.

So.197 Fin. slip 6
11-2-1887

We have already reported on the financial aspect of the question & there are only one or two remarks to be added on that subject. Our offices, council room & Govt House are all complete & in good order. It would be a great pity if they were not made use of. I am constrained to admit that during the past few years far too much public money has been spent on these & other improvements at Ootacamund. This however cannot now be helped: in this respect it is clear "the sun cannot go back on the dial". All that the present Administration can do is to see that no more public money is spent here during its tenure of office than is absolutely necessary. If it does this, and if it restricts its stay on the Hills to six months or thereabouts, I am persuaded that we shall hear no more of the recent agitation.

P.P.H. [Hutchins]
31 Aug

Civil member of Govt Cou

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The Hon'ble Mr Hutchins has gone so fully into the question that I need say but little.

It has been settled that the future annual cost of the move to the Hills of the Madras Govt shall not exceed Rs 27,000: a sum which is "only a fraction of what it now "costs to transport a single "one of the chief Depart-"ments of the Government "of India to Simla". This does not seem extravagant expenditure for the purpose.

Note. This is considerably less than the former expenditure.

To India 11 Feb 1887
No 19.

slip 6

The only Head of a Department who comes up officially with the Govt is the Surgeon General. Any other Departmental Head obtaining permission to work at Ootacamund for a time during the hot weather pays his own way up.

The Head of the Government has always made tours during the Ooty season, and practically as my Hon'ble Colleague points out, no other Civil member of Govt can make such tours. Indeed it is probable that the Governor's colleagues are better employed in carrying on the routine work of the administration, as at present, undisturbed by frequent moves. The experience of the last ten years enables me to say with some degree of confidence that the individual working power of Members & Secretaries is increased fourfold by the residence in a cool climate. It needs to be for the work in that time has been quintupled — or more. The Duke of Buckingham who speaks with authority points out the reasonableness of allowing Members of Council the advantage of an annual change to the Hills.

When the Government are within 22 ~~hours~~ of Madras with rail × and .×. road communications of the best kind it can hardly be fairly alleged that they are out of reach especially as Ootacamund is practically nearer eight # of the Southern Districts than

10 Nov 1884. vide page 1354 Hansard's Parliamentary Debates Third Series. Vol 293.

× 327 miles
.×. 33 miles (this may soon be railed too).
Total 360

# 1 S. Canara
2 Malabar
3 Coimbatore
4 Salem
5 Trichinopoly
6 Tanjore
7 Madura
8 Tinnevelly

It has been stated that the climate of the Nilgiris is prejudicial to the health of the Natives of India (other than Statutory). I know of several instances in which a residence at Ootacamund has been of material advantage to gentlemen whose life had heretofore been spent on the plains, & we have the Maharaja of Mysore, the Jaghirdar of Arnee, and other men of position, who pay periodical visits to the Hills & like the change. During the ten years between 1871 and 1881 (as the census figures shew) the population of the Nilgiri plateau — other than indigenous — increased from 26000 odd to over 37,600 evidently by immigration from the plains. This does not look as if the Natives of the South of India objected to a cool climate.

Nilgiri Plateau.	1871-~~72~~	1881
~~Other Hindus~~ Tamil and Canarese	19,087	27,491
Mahommedans	1,936	2,599
~~Christians~~	5,070	7,533
Total	26,093	37,623

It is alleged that a period of a fortnight or three weeks elapses between the closing of offices at Simla and the reopening at Calcutta. It is not so with us. We can all of us get to work in 24 hours after leaving Madras or Ootacamund, and there is really no dislocation of the business of Government nor waste of the time of subordinates who can travel either up or down in a few hours.

No legislation of importance is, as a rule, carried on at Ootacamund, nor has disadvantage accrued, to my knowledge, to the public interests by reserving such work for disposal during the residence of Government at Madras.

It was settled last year that six months was a not unreasonable time for the headquarters of Govt to remain on the Hills and I submit that the Duke of Buckingham was right when he said that it was for the interest of the Govt that a reasonable time of change of climate shd be spent by the Governor & Members of Council all together upon the Hills.

GM [aster]
5/9

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11 Sp

I fully concur with the remarks of my Honble Colleagues.

If the seat of Government were to be fixed at Madras all the year round, not only, I imagine, would work fall off both in quantity and quality, the Members of Council being unable through press of work to leave the Presidency Town, would possibly focus their attention on the interests of that town to the prejudice of equally important interests in the Districts.

Although Army Head Qrs being permanently located

Leaving Madras or Oota

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here do not add to the expense of the annual Migration, it is a question in which they are deeply concerned, as the permanent location of Govt in Madras would no doubt be followed by the removal of the Head Qrs to that Town.

C.G.A. [illegible]

8.9.87

Draft read in Council and approved H. E. Stokes 16-9-87

[Nos 1346-47 Public d/ 16-9-87]

Confidl

27

Public 1

Despd with 5 spare copies 27/9

No: 1347 16th Sep. 1887

(X) To the Secretary to the Govt. of India, Home Department.

(X) printed
[Spl Copy of letter attached at end]

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. $\frac{30}{1712}$ dated 1st Augt. 1887, requesting to be furnished with a report regarding the administrative aspects of the annual migration of this Government to the Nilgiris, and in reply to submit the following observations.

Read in Council & approved.
HES
16/9.

[illegible] ante

2. The reference is assumed to relate only to the civil administration. The fixing of the Army Head Quarters at Ootacamund is an entirely separate question, though it would hardly be

possible to retain them on
the Hills, but for the annual
migration of the Government.
The grounds for the ~~removal~~ change
of Army Head Quarters need
not be discussed here; and
the arrangement need only
be referred to there because it
excited ~~[illegible]~~ apprehensions
that the permanent removal
of the Seat of Government
would follow, and strengthened
the agitation ~~[illegible]~~ of 1884
which led to petitions to, &
debate in, the House of Lords.

3. The annual migration of this
Govt. to Ootacamund ~~[illegible]~~ year began in the year 1870
~~in 1869 when the head of~~
~~[illegible]~~
~~subject.~~ The state of things
which existed before that
~~[illegible]~~ date is described in the
minutes of H.E. Lord Napier

if it did not originate,

and Mr. A. J. Arbuthnot which
were forwarded to the Govt. of India
with letter No. 1669 dated 3rd Oct.
1869. Owing to tours and to
various members of the Govern-
ment leaving Madras for short
periods of necessary relaxation
the Council ~~was~~ rarely complete
for more than half the ~~year~~,
& often the whole work devolved
on ~~single~~ two members, ~~or some~~
on a single one. It seemed pre-
ferable that the entire Govt.
should take the necessary change
together, and accordingly the
Secretary of State sanctioned the
removal of the whole Govt. to
Ootacamund for three months
in each year. This plan was then
followed for 3 or 4 years next
after 1869; the annual cost
being some 7000 Rs. ~~[illegible]~~ Since then
a Govt. House & Offices have

been built, and the period passed at Ootacamund has been extended to 6 months, & occasionally even longer. The prayer of the petition which was supported by Lord Napier in the debate of 1884. was not that the sanction w^h^ had been given at his instance should be ~~been~~ withdrawn, but that the period of the stay of Govt. on the hills should be curtailed. The conditions under which work is carried on at Ootacamund have entirely changed since offices have been built and printed records accumulated; the inconvenience which was felt when the Govt. moved as it were in light marching order ~~has~~ is no longer ~~felt~~ exists. while the desired remedy for the ~~the evil is of the almost con-~~ ~~Start~~ frequent incompleteness of the Council has been ~~discovered~~ deemed.

H.E. the Gov. in C. is decidedly of opinion, that provided the stay of Government on the Hills is not ~~needlessly~~ prolonged further beyond six months, the present arrangements are advantageous for the public interests.

4. The objections commonly urged are.

(1) the interruption caused by the moves ~~out~~ from & to Madras
(2) dislocation, & delay of business caused by distance from records & printing press.
(3) loss of touch of the people, of all industries but the planting industry, & of public opinion
(4) inconvenience and hardships to natives, clerks in the service & others, who are compelled to resort to the Hills.
(5) interruption to legislative business.

5. On the first point much misapprehension exists. It is supposed that ten days are lost in the transfer each way but this is an entire mistake. The journey ~~from Ma~~ between Madras & Ooty occupies only 22 hours, the distance of the latter place from the railway being only 33 miles by an excellent road. The arrangements made are such that the members, and secretaries to Govt., lose but the day actually spent in transit and are in full work immediately on arrival. When a special train is run from Madras, not even one day need be lost. The objection on the ground of interruption to work entailed by the move is, as far the Madras Govt. is concerned, unfounded.

6. As stated above, the continuous working of Government is much less subject to dislocation now than was the case when ~~the~~ Madras was the headquarters throughout the year; and though sometimes delay occurs owing to the principal record room being in Madras ~~the th~~ it is reduced to a minimum by the maintenance of sets of printed proceedings of Govt. at Ootacamund, so that records for a long series of years are now practically complete there. The cases which require reference to the older records kept in Madras are seldom urgent.

7. As to losing touch of the people, if that means the great mass of the people of the country, Govt. must maintain its touch with them rather through its district officers than by direct intercourse. At Ootacamund, which is a place of resort as a sanitarium

the Govt. sees at least as much of the district officers as at ~~they would~~ Madras; & even more during the hot weather months. The influence of the public press is of course felt there in no less degree. The newspapers of the Presidency town, and the proceedings of meetings held there, reach the Govt. only 20 hours later than they would at Madras. The Govt. are not less solicitous, or less advantageously situated at Ootacamund for the promotion of industries throughout the Presidency than they would be at Madras; if removed from immediate contact with Madras industries they are brought into nearer relations with others not less important; and it might even be urged that ~~[illegible]~~ as regards the Madras industries, occasional absence enables the Govt. to take a fresher & more perspective view of their progress. It can hardly be said

It is for the benefit of the administration that the Govt. should escape for a time from the somewhat exclusive influences of the Presidency town

who have spent their lives in the country

that as regards the manners of the people in the Presidency generally; the knowledge & experience of the civilian members of the Govt. ~~is~~ would be increased, or their touch rendered closer, by a residence in Madras in the hot weather for a few months; while the move to the Hills does not interfere with the touch of the head of the Government, which affords him the means of acquiring personal knowledge & touch of upcountry districts.

48. The objection as to the hardship imposed on natives by the move, ~~is so~~ and the difficulties entailed on petitioners & others who desire to represent grievances, ~~and is greatly~~ is based on exaggeration. The climate of Ootacamund is not so forbidding as to prevent many natives from visiting there for healthful change, and in irrigation

from the plains is increasing. The population of the Nilgiris plateau, other than indigenous rose 44 per cent between 1871 & 1881. But few native clerks are brought up, & no difficulty or serious objection has been ~~made~~ raised by such as come. As to petitioners & others, the Govt. of India is aware that it is not the practice of the local Govts. to hear oral pleadings or to require the personal attendance of memorialists; all appeals & petitions have to be put in writing. In point of distance & accessibility, Ootacamund is practically nearer than Madras to no less than eight districts.

9. The legislative business of the Govt. is intermittent & not such in quantity or character as to require ~~the~~ continuous sittings of the legislative Council

and no inconvenience has resulted from the practice which has obtained of confining legislation (with rare exceptions) to the period which Govt. remains at Madras.

10 Having thus briefly discussed the chief objections which have been urged to the annual migration, the Govt. wish to refer to the main ground on which the periodical change to the Hills must be justified. Even in England an annual recess for rest & relaxation is recognized as essential for men who have much brain work to do; and in this country such is allowed to Judges & all ~~other~~ public officers with the sole exception of members of Council. These cannot go on leave, and the work has so enormously increased of late years that a considerable amount of division of labour under the portfolio system has

From 319 Misc/811-12 (not put up) Sent to office) had become a necessity. In consequence should one take a respite, however necessary, the other would have to do double work – an almost impossibility weighted as they are already. The members of Govt. are all men somewhat advanced in years and at least half of them have served some 30 years in an Indian climate. The change to the Hills a relief from a tropical climate ~~[illegible]~~ for a portion of the year alone enables them to bear the continuous heavy strain put upon them. H.E. in Council has no hesitation in bearing testimony to the increased efficiency & greater celerity of the work done during the annual sojourn in a Hill climate.

8. The terms of your reference include the financial question but I am to request attention to the considerable reduction

which under recent arrangements this Govt. has been able to make in the cost of the move to the Hills, and to the comparatively trifling amount of the sum involved. As to expenditure of public money on the Hills consequent on the migration ~~[illegible]~~ H.E. in C. is prepared to admit that in the past it has been somewhat liberal; but everything that is essential has now been provided, and it will be the constant care of this Govt. hereafter to restrict to the utmost expenditure of this kind in the future.

W.C.

16th September 1887, Nos. 1346 and 1347, Public.

CONFIDENTIAL.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC DEPARTMENT.

Read—the following paper:—

From A. P. MacDONNELL, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department (Public), to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Simla, 1st August 1887, No. 30-1712.

I am directed to forward the accompanying copy of a despatch* from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India on the subject of the periodic removal of the Government of India to Simla, and to invite the special attention of His Excellency the Governor in Council to paras. 10 and 11 of the despatch.

2. The Governor-General in Council will be glad to be favored, as soon as possible, with a full report on the administrative aspects of this question, so far as the annual migration of His Excellency in Council to a hill station is concerned. The report now called for should be in continuation of, and regarded as supplementary to, the report which has been called for by the Financial Department of the Government of India in its No. 3831, dated 23rd October 1886, which refers only to the financial aspects of the case.

3. The despatch from the Secretary of State should be treated as *confidential.*

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* No. 14 (Public), dated 20th January 1887.

Enclosure.

From Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, to His Excellency the Right Honorable the Governor-General of India in Council, dated India Office, London, 20th January 1887, No. 14 (Public).

As Your Excellency in Council is no doubt aware, the question of the annual migration of the Government of India to Simla has, on several occasions, recently been brought under notice in Parliament, and has, moreover, attracted a considerable amount of public attention, both in this country and in India. The matter has, from time to time, been discussed in correspondence between the Government of India and the Secretary of State. But it has never been dealt with conclusively; and it appears to me desirable, for various reasons, that the whole subject should now be fully and carefully considered, with a view to determining, if possible, whether the objections urged against the present practice of the Government of India have any substantial foundation, and, if they have, how far that practice should be modified.

2. The migration of the Government of India to Simla, as at present understood, may be said to date from 1864, when Sir John Lawrence became Governor-General. Prior to that date, the Governor-General, in his visits to the interior, was unaccompanied by his Council, the Members of which remained in Calcutta,—where the President in Council exercised the full powers of the Governor-General, in Council, though the Governor-General himself exercised simultaneously (but, no doubt, subject to arrangements with the President which prevented any inconvenient clashing of authority) similar powers, though separated from his Council. That system had the great advantage, the absence of which is one of the principal objections commonly urged against the present system, that the public offices of the Supreme Government were fixed and open all the year round in Calcutta. In the opinion, however, of many of the authorities an arrangement under which it was possible for the Governor-General to be separated for an indefinite period from his Council was very objectionable. It was alleged to be costly, uncertain, fraught with delay to the transaction of public business, and unsuited to exigencies calling for

prompt decision. For these and other reasons it was abandoned by Sir John Lawrence, who introduced the practice of taking his Executive Council with him to Simla. In adopting this course, he acted with the approval of the Members of his Council, and also, no doubt, in accordance, to a certain extent, with the intention indicated by Parliament in enacting the Indian Councils Act of 1861, which clearly contemplated the possibility of the Members of the Council being summoned to meet at places other than Calcutta.

3. The merits of the system thus introduced were discussed in correspondence which took place between the Government of India and the Secretary of State in 1868, as to the administration of Bengal, and incidentally as to the continuance of Calcutta as the capital of India. In his despatch of the 16th of January 1868, Public, No. 10, Sir Stafford Northcote said (paras. 6 to 8):—

"Calcutta is now the recognised capital of India, but, in practice, it is the seat of the Supreme Government for only half the year, for the Governor-General has recently abandoned the custom of paying cursory visits as formerly to other parts of Her Majesty's dominions in India, leaving the Council under its President at Calcutta, and has substituted that of taking his Council with him to Simla, which has now become almost an alternative metropolis.

"It is alleged by some that serious inconveniences have been the results of the establishment of this system, though others have pointed out advantages which are said to more than counterbalance them, and have argued that the present plan is decidedly superior to that for which it has been substituted. Upon this question I do not desire now to express any opinion."

. . . .

"The alternatives for it would appear to be these. Either that Calcutta should remain the capital of India, and that the Council should have its stationary head-quarters there, leaving the Governor-General at liberty to visit other parts of India, either alone or with a selected number of his Council, . . . or that some new capital should be fixed on; or, lastly, that provision should be made for enabling the Governor-General in Council to establish himself from time to time in such places, and for such periods, as he may consider the exigencies of his vast dominion to require. Upon this important question I desire to receive your advice, and I request that you will consider it as well from an Imperial point of view and in its bearing on the general government of India, as in relation to the effect it has upon the more limited question of the proper form of government for Bengal."

4. In reply to the despatch from which these paragraphs are quoted, the Government of India forwarded[*] Minutes by the Governor-General and the various Members of his Council. In so far as these Minutes dealt with the question now under consideration, they showed, with certain minor differences, a consensus of opinion upon two points, namely, that it was not necessary or desirable that the Governor-General should remain throughout the year at Calcutta, and that, in his absences from the capital, the Governor-General ought ordinarily to be accompanied by his Council. On both these points the opinion of Sir John Lawrence was most decided, though he recommended that Calcutta should still be the seat of the Government of India. In his Minute of the 19th of February 1868, he said, para. 30: "But, while recommending that the seat of the Government of India should remain at Calcutta, I should be quite averse to any proposal for fixing it there all the year round. Such a plan would grievously weaken the Government of India, and deprive it of the best means of learning its duty and of understanding the country and people under its charge. It is essential that the Governor-General should be able to move about the interior of India, and this has always been done by every person who has held that office. . . . . In moments of urgency the Governor-General can move alone; but in ordinary times when he moves it is most desirable that he should be accompanied by his Council. It is in this way that the duties of the Government can best be discharged." It appeared to him, moreover, that in regard to political as well as climatic conditions, Simla was the most convenient place of residence for the Governor-General during the greater part of his absence from Calcutta; but that these conditions might vary, and that it might at any time be convenient that the Government of India should move temporarily to other places besides Simla, for example, to Ootacamund in the Madras Presidency, or to Poona in the Bombay Presidency.

5. That correspondence did not result in the issue of any orders by the Secretary of State on the migration of the Government to Simla. In January 1876, however, a further correspondence arose regarding it, on a proposal made by the Governor-General in Council that Simla should be formally recognised as the summer residence of the Government,—the special object in view being to obtain permission to carry out certain sanitary improvements much needed in that station. It was pointed out that further experience had served to confirm the views expressed by Lord Lawrence in 1868, that whenever there were no special reasons to call for the presence of the Governor-General and his Council at Calcutta or elsewhere, there was no station where the business of Government could, on the whole, be better transacted than at Simla.

6. Lord Salisbury sanctioned[†] the expenditure for sanitary improvements asked for, but said that he had no intention of consenting that Simla should be constituted an alternative capital, or that the Governor-General or his Council should reside there when special reasons called for their presence elsewhere. His Lordship further gave prominence to the important bearing of the prolonged residence of the Government in the Hills on the effectual carrying out of the policy of the Indian Councils Act relative to the attendance of the non-official Additional Members at the deliberations of the Legislative Council; and while admitting that certain very urgent or special legislation, and the executive preparation of legislative measures, might properly be carried on at Simla, he inquired whether the Government of India saw any difficulty in an understanding, to be adhered to, save in exceptional cases, that their regular legislative sittings should be held at Calcutta only.

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[*] *See* Public letter, dated 28th March 1868, No. 50.

[†] Public despatch, dated 25th May 1876, No. 64.

7. In a further despatch of the 20th of December 1877, Legislative, No. 68, the Marquis of Salisbury reverted to the same important subject, saying, "Any method of transacting legislative business, which, in respect of place or time, unnecessarily discourages or prevents the attendance of these (the non-official Additional) Members must be condemned as defeating the plain intention of the Imperial Legislature. But, under the present practice of the Government of India, there is only one place at which and only one period of the year during which the systematic attendance of Additional Members can be secured. As a rule, the mercantile gentlemen summoned to your Council can attend it at Calcutta alone; and since the extension of railways, Calcutta is probably, on the whole, the place at which it is most convenient for Native gentlemen of rank to assist in your deliberations . . . . Under these circumstances, I am of opinion that Your Excellency will best give effect to the important Statute from which so large a portion of your power is derived, by making such arrangements as will admit of your Executive Government being, as a rule, represented at Calcutta during the whole period between the 1st day of November and the 15th day of April."

8. It is not necessary for me to enter further into the correspondence which has taken place in various departments on matters connected with this subject. It may be gathered generally from that correspondence that while the Secretary of State has declined to regard Simla as an alternative capital, and has all along endeavoured to curtail expenditure upon it, and to limit, as far as possible, the residence of the Government of India there, Simla has, nevertheless, approached nearer and nearer to being the permanent and real head-quarters of the Government of India.

9. The question is one of very great importance in many respects, besides its bearing on the legislative work of the Council, to which Lord Salisbury's remarks quoted above were specially directed. And, agreeing as I do in all His Lordship then said, I much regret to observe, from the return forwarded with Your Lordship's Financial despatch of the 3rd February 1885, that the orders contained in the despatch of the 20th of December 1877 have not produced the effect that was desired in curtailing the periods of the absence of the Supreme Government from Calcutta. It appears to me also that the whole of the existing practice, under which the complete machinery of the Government of India is removed for the greater part of the year from Calcutta to a station remote and not easily accessible, requires to be most carefully examined and reconsidered.

10. It is unnecessary for me to dwell on the more general objections commonly urged against the system, such as the loss to the ruling authorities themselves of all that is gained by contact with public opinion, the periodical dislocation of the business of Government, the waste of time of subordinates, and occasionally the great inconvenience to the public. These considerations will, no doubt, receive Your Lordship's careful attention. Another important objection which has been raised to the system is its cost to the public revenues. It appears from the returns furnished by Your Lordship's Government early in 1885 that the cost is large and shows, on the whole, a tendency to increase,—the increase from 1879-80 to 1883-84 being not far from a lakh of rupees. I am of opinion that Your Lordship should report to me your views on the whole subject, bearing in mind that serious doubts have been expressed as to the necessity of the Governor-General having his Council at Simla, and of all the Government officers being temporarily transferred to that station every year.

11. My observations apply to some extent also to the annual migrations of the Local Governments: and as to these migrations I request that Your Excellency in Council will cause the fullest inquiry to be made. The subject, as a whole, is a large one, and I shall be glad to receive, as early as possible, an expression of your views upon it.

ORDER—dated 16th September 1887, No. 1346, Public.

The following letter will be addressed to the Government of India:—

(True Extract.)

H. E. STOKES,
Acting Chief Secretary.

Letter—to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, dated Ootacamund, 16th September 1887, No. 1347.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 30-1712, dated 1st August 1887, requesting to be furnished with a report regarding the administrative aspects of the annual migration of this Government to the Nílgiris, and in reply to submit the following observations:—

2. The reference is assumed to relate only to the civil administration. The fixing of the Army Head-quarters at Ootacamund is an entirely separate question, though it would hardly be possible to retain them on the Hills, but for the annual migration of the Government. The grounds for the change of Army Head-quarters need not be discussed here; and the arrangement need only be referred to, because it excited apprehensions that the permanent removal of the seat of Government would follow, and thus strengthened, if it did not originate, the agitation of 1884, which led to petitions to, and debate in, the House of Lords.

3. The annual migration of this Government to Ootacamund began in the year 1870. The state of things which existed before that date is described in the Minutes of His Excellency Lord Napier and Mr. A. J. Arbuthnot, which were forwarded to the Government of India with letter, No. 1669, dated 3rd December 1869. Owing to tours and to various members of the Government leaving Madras for short periods of necessary relaxation, the Council was rarely complete for more than half the year, and often the whole work devolved on two members, sometimes even on one. It seemed preferable that the entire Government should take the necessary change together, and accordingly the Secretary of State sanctioned the removal of the whole Government to Ootacamund for three months in each year. This plan was followed for three or four years next after 1869, the annual cost being some 7,000 rupees. Since then a Government House and offices have been built, and the period passed at Ootacamund has been extended to six months, and occasionally even longer. The prayer of the petition, which was supported by Lord Napier in the debate of 1884, was not that the sanction which had been given at his instance should be withdrawn, but that the period of the stay of Government on the Hills should be curtailed. The conditions under which work is carried on at Ootacamund have entirely changed since offices have been built and printed records accumulated; the inconvenience which was felt when the Government moved as it were in light marching order no longer exists; while the desired remedy for the frequent incompleteness of the Council has been secured. His Excellency the Governor in Council is decidedly of opinion, that provided the stay of Government on the Hills is not prolonged beyond six months, the present arrangements are advantageous for the public interests.

4. The objections commonly urged are—

(1) the interruption caused by the moves from and to Madras;
(2) dislocation and delay of business caused by distance from records and printing press;
(3) loss of touch of the people, of all industries but the planting industry, and of public opinion;
(4) inconvenience and hardships to natives, clerks in the service and others, who are compelled to resort to the Hills;
(5) interruption to legislative business.

5. On the first point much misapprehension exists. It is supposed that ten days are lost in the transfer each way, but this is an entire mistake, the journey between Madras and Ootacamund occupies only 22 hours, the distance of the latter place from the railway being only 33 miles by an excellent road. The arrangements made are such that the members and Secretaries to Government lose but the day actually spent in transit, and are in full work immediately on arrival. When a special train is run from Madras, not even one day need be lost. Thus the objection on the ground of interruption to work entailed by the move is, as far as the Madras Government is concerned, quite unfounded.

6. As stated above (section 3), the continuous working of Government is much less subject to dislocation now than was the case while Madras was the head-quarters throughout the year; and though sometimes delay occurs owing to the principal record-room being in Madras, it is reduced to a minimum by the maintenance of sets of printed Proceedings of Government at Ootacamund, so that records for a long series of years are now practically complete there. The cases which require reference to the older records kept in Madras are seldom emergent.

7. As to losing touch of the people, if that means the great mass of the people up-country, Government must maintain its touch with them rather through its district officers than by direct intercourse. At Ootacamund, which is a place of resort as a sanitarium, the Government sees at least as much of the district officers as at Madras, and even more during the hot-weather months. The influence of the public press is, of course, felt there in no less degree. The newspapers of the Presidency town, and the proceedings of meetings held there, reach the Government only 20 hours later than they would at Madras. The Government are not less solicitous or less advantageously situated at Ootacamund for the promotion of industries throughout the Presidency than they would be at Madras; if removed from immediate contact with Madras industries, they are brought into nearer relation with others not less important; and it might even be urged that as regards the Madras industries, occasional absence enables the Government to take a fresher and more practical view of their progress. It is for the benefit of the administration that the Government should escape for a time from the somewhat exclusive influences of the Presidency town. It can hardly be said that as regards the masses of the people in the Presidency generally, the knowledge or interest of the Civilian members of the Government, who have spent their lives in the country, would be increased, or their touch rendered closer, by a residence in Madras in the hot weather for a few months; while the move to the Hills does not interfere with the tours of the head of the Government, which afford him the means of acquiring personal knowledge and touch of up-country districts.

8. The objection as to the hardship imposed on natives by the move, and the difficulties entailed on petitioners and others who desire to represent grievances, is based on exaggeration. The climate of Ootacamund is not so forbidding as to prevent many natives from resorting there for healthful change, and immigration from the plains is increasing. The population of the Nílgiri plateau, other than indigenous, rose 44 per cent. between 1871 and 1881. But few native clerks are brought up, and no difficulty or serious objection has been raised by such as come. As to petitioners and others, the Government of India is aware that it is not the practice of the local Governments to hear oral pleadings or to require the personal attendance of memorialists; all appeals and petitions have to be put in writing. In point of distance and accessibility, Ootacamund is practically nearer than Madras to no less than eight districts.

9. The legislative business of the Government is intermittent, and not such in quantity or character as to require continuous sittings of the Legislative Council, and no inconvenience has resulted from the practice which has obtained of confining legislation (with rare exceptions) to the period which Government passes at Madras.

10. Having thus briefly discussed the chief objections which have been urged to the annual migration, the Government wish to refer to the main ground on which the periodical change to the Hills must be justified. Even in England an annual recess for rest and relaxation is recognised as essential for men who have much brain work; and in this country such is allowed to Judges and all public officers, with the sole exception of Members of Council. These can get no leave, and the work has so enormously increased of late years that a considerable amount of division of labour under the port-folio system has become a necessity. In consequence, if one should take a respite, however necessary, the others would have to do double work,—an almost impossibility weighted as they are already. The members of Government are all men somewhat advanced in years and at least half of them have served some thirty years in an Indian climate. The change to the Hills and relief from a tropical climate for a portion of the year alone enables

them to bear the continuous and heavy strain put upon them. His Excellency in Council has no hesitation in bearing testimony to the increased efficiency and greater outturn of the work done during the annual sojourn in a Hill climate.

11. The terms of your reference exclude the financial question, but I am to request attention to the considerable reduction which, under recent arrangements, this Government has been able to make in the cost of the move to the Hills, and to the comparatively trifling amount of the sum involved. As to expenditure of public money on the Hills consequent on the migration, His Excellency in Council is prepared to admit that in the past it has been somewhat liberal; but everything that is essential has now been provided, and it will be the constant care of this Government to restrict to the utmost expenditure of this kind in the future.

H. E. STOKES,
Acting Chief Secretary.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

Regr. No.

HOME 1887 DEPT.

[ ]

CONFIDENTIAL.

From the Government of
Fort St. George.

Issued

Recd. *Encl.*

Letter, dated 16th September 1887, No. 1347.

SEPTEMBER.

Move to the Hills.

Furnishing report regarding the administrative aspects of the annual migration of this Government to the Nilgiris.

CONFIDENTIAL.

PUBLIC DEPARTMENT.

NOTES.

[SUBJECT.—*Move of Government to the Hills.*]

From the Government of India, Home Department, No. 30-1782, *dated* 1st *August* 1887.

For orders as to the lines on which the reply is to proceed. Attention is requested to the despatch of Mr. Adams' Government No. 8 of 4th March 1881.

H. E. STOKES.

We are asked for a report on the effects on the administration of the annual removal of Government from Madras to Ootacamund.

I presume the reference is confined to the Civil administration. The fixing of military head-quarters on the hills is an entirely different question. But it is useful to refer to it because, I believe, it was one of the chief grounds for the agitation raised in 1884. Men found the Commander-in-Chief located here permanently and the Government erecting substantial offices and gradually prolonging their stay. They naturally thought it high time to cry out, lest the permanent removal of Government should also become an accomplished fact.

To understand the matter aright, the position of Government at three different stages should be contrasted. First of all before 1869. The state of things is described in the Minutes of Lord Napier and Sir A. T. Arbuthnot of that year. Owing to tours and to various members leaving Madras for short periods of necessary relaxation, the Council was rarely complete for more than half the year, or seven months out of the twelve, and often the whole work was devolved on two members, or even on a single member. It seemed preferable that the entire Government should take the necessary change together and accordingly the Secretary of State sanctioned the removal of the whole Government to Ootacamund for an annual term not exceeding three months. This plan was followed in the three or four years next after 1869, the annual cost being some Rs. 7,000. Since then a Government House and offices have been built and the period passed at Ootacamund has been prolonged to six months.

Occasionally it has even exceeded six months. In the Debate of 1884 Lord Napier said that it had grown to from six to eight months, and the prayer of the petition which he supported was not that the sanction which had been given at his instance might be cancelled, but simply that this period might be curtailed. Lord Stanley of Alderley followed in the same strain. He thought eight months too long: he saw nothing objectionable in the Bombay Government's annual visits to Poona, or even to Mahableshwar as it is only 24 hours' journey from Bombay. He seems to have thought that another month was lost in preparation and travelling.

A good deal of misapprehension prevails on this last point. I can safely assert that the *time so lost* in this Presidency is inappreciable. The journey from Madras to Ootacamund occupies less than a day. Timely notice is invariably published so that the official post is delivered and taken up for disposal at Madras up to a particular date, and from the very next day at Ootacamund. I know that this year I was at work in Madras up to the hour of my departure, 5 P.M., and was quite ready for more work here the next evening; and I believe that by the following morning, but for the Easter holidays intervening, work would have been ready for me also—in addition to what I brought with me, part of which I did in the train. Had a special train been provided, as was generally the case in Mr. Grant Duff's time, we should have all reached Ootacamund between 10 and 11, before office hours. Thus no more than a single day at most need be lost by the Members of Government or the Secretaries, and I fancy the same remark applies to clerks also.

And the change is now arranged so smoothly that it is equally untrue that there is any *dislocation of the business* of Government. This is not the flaw of the present system but of that which prevailed before 1869, when for weeks and even months together the whole work fell on two, or even on one, of the members. It has now increased to such an extent that no single man could possibly get through it, even in a perfunctory manner. The advantage sought by changing the system in 1870 was to get rid of such dislocation, and as the Government still keep together this advantage is still maintained.

But the term "dislocation" may be taken to cover the *delay in the despatch of business* caused by our absence from the Government record-room and printing office at Madras. Here, at all events, we have a considerable advantage over the intermediate system, when Government during its stay on the hills was, as it were, in camp, without any records and with hardly any establishment. The Secretaries could probably tell us more about such delays as I am now contemplating. All I can say is that, speaking generally, a reference to old records is more necessary in cases which do not call for emergent disposal, and that, owing to copies of most of the more modern records (printed) being kept at Ootacamund and to other similar arrangements, far less delay occurs now than when Government came up in what may be termed light marching order. When we add to this the undoubted fact that our power of work up here in the hot weather is far greater than it could be in the plains, I think we may safely say that on the whole business is expedited rather than retarded by our spending the hot weather on the hills.

Then there is the objection that by coming to Ootacamund we lose touch of the people, of all industries but the planting industry, and of public opinion, by which I suppose we are to understand the public opinion of the Presidency town. The natural and legitimate way in which public opinion is brought to bear on Government is through the medium of the public press or public meetings. Our Madras newspapers reach us here only twenty hours later than we should see them at Madras, and they give us reports of all public meetings earlier than the proceedings could be communicated to us in any other manner. I cannot for a moment admit that we are less solicitous here for the promotion of industries than we should be at Madras. On the contrary an occasional absence affords a distinct advantage so far as the industries of the Presidency town are concerned. The human mind is always apt to disregard or grow callous to what is seen every day. Our annual removal and return enhance our interest in Madras matters and enable us to take a fresher and more practical view of their progress.

As for losing touch of the people—if that means the great mass of the people upcountry—Government must maintain its touch with them rather through its District officers than by direct intercourse. At Ootacamund we see more of the District officers than we ever should at Madras. During the months of our stay here the Judges have their recess while other officers come on leave. Thus we have opportunities of conversing with many who could not visit Madras in the cold weather; hardly any would go there during the hot months. Apart from newspapers the only other way in which we can keep up touch with the upcountry population is by tours. The sojourn of Government on the hills in no way interferes with the Governor's tours, and much to my regret the Members of Council can no longer find leisure for such a delightful break in their monotonous and engrossing work. In his Minute of 1869 Sir A. T. Arbuthnot suggested that six weeks for each member should suffice for this purpose. I wish I could get half that period, or even as many days, but I see no such prospect.

And this brings me to the main ground on which the periodical change to the hills must be justified. The Members of Government must be somewhat advanced in age, and at least half have served some thirty years in an Indian climate. Even in our own bracing land an annual recess for rest and relaxation is recognised as essential for men who have much brain work. As matters stand the Civilian Members of Council have no respite whatever. We cannot get any leave and it would only be by asking my colleague to do double work—a wholly impossible task—that I could leave my papers even for a day. As far as necessary rest and relaxation went I was better off in the High Court, where I had two months' real vacation. As I can now have no rest surely I require some change of air and climate at the least. It seems to be considered by some that the absence of Government from Madras is unfair to petitioners who have, or think they have, grievances to be redressed. To this there are two answers: Ootacamund is hardly less accessible than Madras: from some of the districts it is more accessible: Government do not hear oral pleadings nor require the personal attendance of memorialists; all appeals and petitions have to be put into writing.

During this hot season one or two matters have come before me connected with Madras in which I should certainly have been glad of a personal inspection of buildings there or of a consultation with persons living there. But, on the other hand, in at least an equal number of matters connected with Ootacamund, I have had that advantage, which I should not have enjoyed if I had remained at Madras.

G.O., 197, Financial, 11th February 1887.

We have already reported on the financial aspect of the question and there are only one or two remarks to be added on that subject. Our offices, Council room and Government House are all complete and in good order. It would be a great pity if they were not made use of. I am constrained to admit that during the last few years far too much public money has been spent on these and other improvements at Ootacamund. This however cannot now be helped: in this respect it is clear "the sun cannot go back on the dial." All that the present administration can do is to see that no more public money is spent here during its tenure of office than is absolutely necessary. If it does this, and if it restricts its stay on the hills to six months or thereabouts, I am persuaded that we shall have no more of the recent agitation.

P. P. H[UTCHINS]—31-8-87.

The Hon'ble Mr. Hutchins has gone so fully into the question that I need say but little.

NOTE.—This is considerably less than the former expenditure.

To India, 197, 11th February 1887.

It has been settled that the future annual cost of the move to the hills of the Madras Government shall not exceed Rs. 27,000, a sum which is "only a fraction of what it now costs to transport a single "one of the chief departments of the Government of India to "Simla." This does not seem extravagant expenditure for the purpose.

The only head of a department who comes up officially with the Government is the Surgeon-General. Any other departmental head obtaining permission to work at Ootacamund for a time during the hot weather pays his own way up.

10th November 1884—*vide* page 1354, Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 3rd Series, Vol. 293.

The head of the Government has always made tours during the Ootacamund season, and practically, as my honourable colleague points out, no other *Civil* Member of Government can make such tours. Indeed it is probable that the Governor's colleagues are better employed in carrying on the routine work of the administration, as at present, undisturbed by frequent moves. The experience of the last ten years enables me to say with some degree of confidence that the individual working power of Members and Secretaries is increased fourfold by the residence in a cool climate. It needs to be for the work in that time has been quintupled, or more. The Duke of Buckingham, who speaks with authority, points out the reasonableness of allowing Members of Council the advantage of an annual change to the hills.

MILES.

*	327
†	33 (this may soon be rail too).
Total ..	360

‡ 1. South Canara.
2. Malabar.
3. Coimbatore.
4. Salem.
5. Trichinopoly.
6. Tanjore.
7. Madura.
8. Tinnevelly.

When the Government are within 22 hours of Madras with rail * and road † communication of the best kind, it can hardly be fairly alleged that they are out of reach especially as Ootacamund is practically nearer sight ‡ of the Southern districts than is Madras itself.

It has been stated that the climate of the Nilgiris is prejudicial to the health of the natives of India (other than statutory). I know of several instances in which a residence at Ootacamund has been of material advantage to gentlemen whose life had theretofore been spent on the plains, and we have the Maharaja of Mysore, the Jaghirdar of Arni, and other men of position, who pay periodical visits to the hills and like the change. During the ten years between 1871 and 1881 (as the census figures show) the population of the Nilgiri *plateau*—other than indigenous—increased from 26,000 odd to over 37,600 evidently by immigration from the plains This does not look as if the natives of the South of India objected to a cool climate.

Nilgiri plateau.

	1871-72.	1881.§
Other Hindus—Tamil and Canarese ..	19,087	27,491
Muhammadans	1,936	2,599
Christians	5,070	7,533
Total ..	26,093	37,623

§ 1891.	1901.
83,531	86,658
4,600	5,867
11,626	14,845
99,757	107,380

It is alleged that a period of a fortnight or three weeks elapses between the closing of offices at Simla and the reopening at Calcutta. It is not so with us. We can all of us get to work in 24 hours after leaving Madras or Ootacamund, and there is really no dislocation of the business of Government nor waste of the time of subordinates who can travel either up or down in a few hours.

No legislation of importance is, as a rule, carried on at Ootacamund, nor has disadvantage accrued, to my knowledge, to the public interests by reserving such work for disposal during the residence of Government at Madras.

It was settled last year that six months was a not unreasonable time for the head-quarters of Government to remain on the hills and I submit that the Duke of Buckingham was right when he said that it was for the interest of the Government that a reasonable time of change of climate should be spent by the Governor and Members of Council all together upon the hills.

C. G. M[ASTER]—5-9-87.

I think that nearly all the remarks made by my honourable colleagues are worth inserting in our reply. I certainly concur with all; but perhaps, when the despatch is drafted, they may wish to correct or modify it. I should like to be allowed to add that I concur chiefly in their remarks because the Governor has less personal interests in the move to the hills than any one connected with the higher offices of the Government.

So long as his colleagues are able and hardworking, and so long as the Chief Secretary and the Secretaries of departments are the same, he can from time to time go on tour, or go to the hills, without any dislocation of public business. But with respect to Members of Council and Chief Secretary, I am at a loss to see how the business of Government could be carried on, if any of them was to be away from his post for more than a few days. I think, therefore, it is desirable that I should point out that it is necessary for the work, which is done day by day by Members of Council and Chief Secretary to be continuous, and that it would be inexpedient and injurious to the public interest if any arrangements were made which would cause a break in the routine. Anything approaching to what in other professions and branches of the service would be considered a reasonable holiday is for them, I fear, an impossibility and therefore I am strongly of opinion that it would be impossible for them long to endure the strain of working in the plains.

It seems, therefore, essential that if continuity and efficiency of administration is to be regarded, and if the security of collective counsel, wisdom and discussion is to have weight, the Members of Government must go for a considerable time to a cool climate.

As to being out of touch with the people, that is an argument which may apply to the Governor, and I feel its force; but he can remedy the defect by making tours, which he generally does; but it cannot apply to Members of Council or the Chief Secretary, as their lives have been passed in the districts, and it is not probable that a few more months spent annually in the mufassal would add much to their knowledge of the people, or to their administrative capacity. If then it is for the public interest that Members of Council and the Secretaries should do their work for a portion of the year in a cool atmosphere, it is necessary that they should be accompanied by their subordinates and records. No official at home would deny this.

I do not know that the above remarks add very much to the strength of the case, as it has been put by my honourable colleagues; but if their modesty prevents them from saying what I have ventured to say as to the intensity of their work and its necessary continuous character, I am ready to write something to the effect of the above in a separate minute.

C[ONNEMARA].

I fully concur with the remarks of my honourable colleagues.

If the seat of Government were to be fixed at Madras all the year round, not only, I imagine, would work fall off both in quantity and quality, the Members of Council, being unable through press of work to leave the Presidency town, would possibly focus their attention on the interests of that town to the prejudice of equally important interests in the districts.

Although Army head-quarters being permanently located here do not add to the expense of the annual migration, it is a question in which they are deeply concerned, as the permanent location of Government in Madras would no doubt be followed by the removal of the head-quarters to that town.

C. G. A[RBUTHNOT]—8-9-87.

Draft read in Council and approved.

H. E. STOKES—16-9-87.

[G.O., Nos. 1346, 1347, Public, dated 16th September 1887.]

READ AGAIN Order of Government, dated
188 , No.

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CURRENT No.

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ORDINARY. PRINTED.

Public DEPARTMENT.

Letter to Govt. of India

~~C.G.~~, DATED 2/16 Sep/87

No. 1347

Back Papers, No.

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Despatched in print. 2/9

CONFIDENTIAL. 201/1887

[Despatch Abstract.]

Move to the hills

forwarding reports regarding the administration aspects of the annual migration of the Govt. to the Nilgiris that a few more months ~~passed~~ spent annually in the mofussil would add much to their knowledge of the people, or to their administrative capacity — If then, it is for the public interest that Members of Council and the Secretaries should do their work for a portion of the year in a cool atmosphere, it is necessary that they should be accompanied by their subordinates and records — No official at home would deny this.

I do not know that the above remarks add argument to the strength of the case, as it has been put by my Hon.ble Colleagues – but if their modesty prevents them from saying what I have ventured to say as to the intensity of their work and ~~the~~ its necessary continuous character – I am ready to write something to the effect of the above in a separate minute

C [onnemara]

I think that among all the remarks made by Mr. Hall's Colleagues are worth inserting in our reply. I certainly concur with all - but perhaps when the despatch is drafted, they may wish to correct or modify it - I should like to be allowed to add that I concur chiefly in their remarks because the Governor has less personal interests in the measure to the Bill, than any one connected with the higher offices of the Government

So long as his Colleagues are able, and hard working, and so long as the Chief Secretary and the Secretaries of Departments are the same. he can from time to time

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As to being out of touch

22

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