M.R.O. 14—10,000—21-4-32.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 1954 Press ~~Mis.~~

201. 202

Dated 12—9—1862.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 12th September 1862.

No. 201. Read the following letter from P. GRANT, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore, to J. W. BREEKS, Esq., Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor, dated Ootacamund, 19th August 1862, No. 59 :—

SIR,

1. I beg to forward an original Petition with translation to the address of His Excellency the Governor. Petitioners have put down in writing, as directed at the time, what they stated in person to his Excellency on the occasion of his lately passing through Coimbatore.

2. The Petition contains three requests :—

(1.) That certain annual allowances which were once granted by Government for the religious ceremonies intended to propitiate the gods, and thereby ensure a regular fall of rain, should be again sanctioned, they were discontinued some ten years ago.

(2.) That the execution of Public Works should be again placed under the charge of the Collector.

(3.) That the Rules sanctioned for the conservation of the jungles in so far as they allow a fee on each cooly, bullock, and bandy load of firewood to be exacted, should be abolished.

Cooly load 6 Pice.
Bullock do. 1 Anna.
Bandy do. 5 Annas.

3. With regard to the annual allowance for religious ceremonies, it can hardly be expected that Government, which has for years been withdrawing from all connection with the religions of the country, will again enter on a course of policy which it has abandoned.

4. The changes contemplated in the re-organization of the Department of Public Works, dispose of the second request of Petitioners.

5. The exaction of fees at the rates marginally indicated, has been adopted in conformity with the Rules for the preservation of jungles drawn up by the Board of Revenue and forwarded for the information and guidance of all Collectors, with their Circular No. 5,497, dated 27th November 1860.

Cooly load 3 Pice.
Bullock do. 1 Anna.
Bandy do. 5 Annas.

6. The rates of fees are light and do not, as alleged by Petitioners, fall on those who cut and collect the fuel, but on the purchasers, and Petitioners no doubt fall within this category. The fees collected are applied to the formation of plantations, and a fund is thus raised for a most useful purpose which would otherwise most likely remain in abeyance for want of money to carry it out. The formation of plantations in a country like Coimbatore, which is so devoid of trees, is a matter of great importance, and deserves all legitimate support.

Translation of a Petition addressed to His Excellency the Governor by the undersigned inhabitants of Coimbatore, under date the 27th June 1862.

1. We beg to inform your Excellency that since the assumption of this country by the English Government a yearly allowance of Rupees 151-4-0, was allowed by Government for "Waroonajapam" and "Roodrabhiskaikum" at the Vellingherry Hills, as well as for "Wanabojanam." These ceremonies were regularly performed, whereby the periodical rains were abundant, and we enjoyed prosperity.

2. The above allowance was discontinued ten years ago, and the performance of the ceremonies ceased, the result of which is the failure of rains, we are thereby put to great inconvenience.

3. We therefore beseech your Excellency will be good enough to order the continuance of the allowance of 151-4-0, and we beg to assure your Excellency that so soon as the ceremonies are again performed, we will undoubtedly have plenty of rain.

4. The control over, and the repair of the channels, tanks, and other sources of irrigation were formerly vested in the Collector. Since their transfer to the Public Works Department the periodical clearing of accumulation, &c., are not properly carried out, the consequence is that

many works of irrigation are so much filled up with mud, that they cannot contain water sufficient for the irrigation of the lands depending on them, we are therefore put to considerable loss. We therefore most earnestly pray your Excellency will be graciously pleased to issue orders to the effect that the repairs of the works of irrigation be hereafter conducted as usual under the orders of the Collector, in which case the periodical repairs will be properly performed, and we will thereby have a sufficient supply of water to our crops.

5. It was formerly the practice for the Circar to institute an enquiry, and ascertain the extent of crops which have failed and the extent of lands laid waste from the Ryots holding, for want of rain and water, but orders are now received abolishing the above practice, and directing the levy of full assessment on all lands whether they yielded produce or not. We are thereby losers, first, because we lose the amount of the expenses incurred by us in cultivating our lands; and secondly, because we are compelled to pay assessment on lands which yielded no produce.

6. We therefore crave your Excellency will be pleased to issue orders to levy the assessment only on those lands which yielded a produce, remitting at the same time the assessment in cases of failure of produce and waste lands.

7. Many poor and helpless people until lately earned their livelihood by selling firewood, which they used to bring from jungles and forests situated at a distance of about 20 miles from Coimbatore, exposing themselves to the most inclemencies of the weather and the ravages of wild animals. Under recent orders a fee is now levied by renters at the following rates, viz., 6 Pice for cooly load, 1 Anna for a bullock load, and 5 Annas for a cart load; since the introduction of this fee system firewood (a necessary of life) has become scarce, and poor people, who bring it, suffer much owing to a portion of their earnings being paid for the fee, and the remainder being inadequate for the maintenance of themselves and families.

8. We therefore humbly solicit your Excellency will be good enough to order the discontinuance of the levy of the above tax, and thereby relieve the poor from their distress and protect them.

Signed by 78 persons,
Inhabitants of Coimbatore.

No. 202. ORDER THEREON, 12th September 1862, No. 1,954.

1. With this letter the Collector of Coimbatore submits a Petition signed by 78 inhabitants of his District, and containing four requests. The Collector mentions three only, but there is one that he has overlooked as will hereafter appear.

2. The Petition commences with a prayer that an allowance of Rupees 150 and odd which was formerly granted by Government, but discontinued some years since, for certain ceremonies supposed to ensure an abundance of rain, may again be sanctioned. This part of the Petition cannot be entertained. Religious ceremonies are matters in which the Government do not in any way interfere.

3. The second request has reference to the maintenance and repair of Public Works, which the Petitioners wish to see again under the charge of the Collector. This is a subject which the Government now have under their consideration in connection with the proposed re-organization of the Department Public Works.

4. Thirdly, and this is the complaint which the Collector has omitted to notice, the Petitioners allege that under the present Rules they are forced to pay the full assessment on all their lands whether they are productive, or whether, in consequence of a failure of rain, either the crops wither, or the lands are left uncultivated. Under an Order, dated 6th August 1859, No. 1,058, and with a view "to free the Ryot from subservience to the inferior Revenue servants, and to simplify the Revenue system," remissions for waste and withered crops were abolished, but subsequently this resolution was considerably modified. The loss of Nunjah crops, as well as Nunjah waste, where clearly owing to natural causes, is now regarded as a

G. O. No. 364, dated 10th March 1860.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
12th September 1862.

fair ground for remission, and the Revenue authorities are allowed a discretion as to granting remission on Punjah waste.

5. Lastly, the Petitioners pray for the abrogation of the Board's Rules for the preservation of jungles, directing the levy of a tax on fuel and firewood. Under those rules firewood cut by the villagers for their own use is free, and it is only when it is cut *for sale* that a tax is imposed upon it. In that case the additional burden falls on the purchaser and not, as alleged in the Petition, on the wood cutter. The tax is necessary for the formation of plantations for the ultimate benefit of the inhabitants, and it cannot be abolished.

6. Under these circumstances the Governor in Council is of opinion that the Petitioners have no just cause for complaint. This opinion and the grounds upon which it is formed will be communicated to them by the Collector.

(Signed) P. P. HUTCHINS,
Acting Deputy Secretary to Government.

3 (a).

N° 59.

Coimbatore-Collector's
Office Ootacamund
19th August 1862

From P. Grant Esqr
Collector of Coimbatore

To J. W. Breeks Esqr
Private Secretary to His Excy
the Governor

Sir,

1 I beg to forward an original petition with translation to the address of His Excellency the Governor. Petitioner have put down in writing as directed at the time what they stated in person to His Excellency on the occasion of his lately passing through Coimbatore.

2 The Petition contains 3 requests

1 That certain annual allowances which were once granted by Government for the religious ceremonies intended to propitiate the Gods and thereby ensure a regular fall of rain, should be

most likely remain in abeyance for want of money to carry it out. The formation of plantations in a country like Coimbatore, which is so devoid of trees, is a matter of great importance and deserves all legitimate support.

I have the honor to be
Sir,
Your most obedient Servt

[illegible]
Collector

Copy
A.G. Harkness

the extent of Crops which have failed and the extent of lands laid waste from the Ryots holding for want of tanks and water.

Such orders are now received abolishing the above practice and directing the levy of full assessment on all lands which were formerly granted le

which
added were formerly granted

to

which
added were formerly granted

to

Revenue Department

No. 1954

Proceedings of the Madras Government
Under date the 12th April 1862.

Read the following letter
from the Collector of
Coimbatore.

Forwards an original Petition with translation from the inhabitants of Coimbatore to His Excellency the Governor. — (Here enter 19th Aug 1862 No. 51)

With this letter the
Collector of Coimbatore sub-
mits a petition signed by
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4 requests. The Collector
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to

Rec'd 24th April 62

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3. The second request has reference to the maintenance and repair of public works which the Petitioners wish to see again under the charge of the Collector. This is a subject which the Government have under their consideration in connection with the proposed re-organization of the Dept^t of Public Works.

4. Thirdly, and this is the complaint which the Collector has omitted to notice, the Petitioners allege that under the present rules they are forced to pay the full assessment on all their lands whether they are productive, or whether, in consequence of a failure of rain, either the crops wither, or the lands are left uncultivated. Under an order dated 6^th August, 1859, N^o 1058 and with a view "to free the Ryot from subserviences to the inferior Revenue servants, and to simplify the Revenue System", remissions for waste and withered crops were

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G. O. No. 364 of 10th Ma

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This opinion and the
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Collector. —

4 Copies to the Bd of Rev Dept 13th
— Class of Commissioners
— P. W. Dept

Registering petition from the Inhabitants of Coimbatore.

Revenue 1862 Departt.
Pro: of Govt for Septr.

No 1954.

Pro: of the Madras Govt.
Dt 12th September 1862.

Passing orders on Coimbatore Collectors letter submitting Petition signed by 78 inhabitants of that District containing four requests.

No 201 & 202.

10/12/94 RH

92-24
RH-94

