

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 788	Press Mis.
Res: 146	
Dated 19 - 4 - 1862	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
9th April 1862.*

No. 145. Read the following letter from J. OUCHTERLONY, Esq., to the Honorable T. PYCROFT, Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Neddivatam, 28th March 1862:—

SIR,

1. I regret to be under the necessity of troubling the Government direct with the under-mentioned subject, but, being given to understand that the management of the Cinchona cultivation is under the uncontrolled direction of Mr. McIvor, the Superintendent of the Government Gardens at Ootacamund, I know of no intermediate authority to which I could in the first instance refer.

2. Waiving for the present some other matters connected with the Cinchona cultivation in this part, I wish now to bring under the consideration of His Excellency the Governor in Council the serious injury that is being inflicted upon the planting interests in the neighbourhood of Goodaloor, by the wanton way in which the wages of labor are being raised beyond their general and fair rate upon these plantations of the Government. It has been for some little time past reported to me by the Superintendents of my Coffee Estates and by others, that the Manager of the Cinchona plantation was giving higher wages than those ordinarily current in the District, was threatening to raise these to any amount necessary to secure labor for the Government work, and that not only by such offers, but through the agency of Maistries, Coolies were being seduced from private Estates. Where reports of this nature are derived from Native sources I attach but little value to them: and I have, therefore, made no representation on the subject till I could make some personal inquiries.

3. I have now ascertained from a person who seems to be in some sort of charge of the plantations, that the pay of ordinary laborers has been raised, the Government paying to Mysore laborers an indiscriminate rate of 6 Rupees a month, and to Coorumbers 4½ Annas a day; while the established rates are 3½ Annas per day to a first class Mysore cooly, and 3 Annas to a second, and 4 Annas a day to a Coorumber. My Estate Maistries persist that parties come down on the Bazar days to Goodaloor, and try to seduce away Coolies who come there from the neighbouring Estates. A case has indeed just occurred, where, if positive averments may be believed, several of my Coolies have been thus treated; and a reference to the Subordinate Judge and to the Magistrate at Ootacamund, will, I think, show that questions of this nature have engaged the attention of their Courts.

4. If the Cinchona cultivation engaged a large amount of labor, then we must look for the rise in the value of labor which follows the competition of a new and extended industry, though, even in such a case, when the Government is the cultivator, we might reasonably look for such well-considered and cautious proceedings as should least disturb private interests. But, in the present case, the wants are so trifling in comparison with other interests, that they create in reality no such competition, and will demand still less to satisfy them after the first operations are completed. The evils, however, of the arbitrary increase of the wages of labor, and by an authority which in this country has so extraordinary an influence over the people, will remain and be replete with active injury. The seeds of dissatisfaction will be fatally sown; men will work indifferently under the idea that they are not fairly paid, an unsettled feeling will prevail; and that against which planters always set their faces under an instinct of common safety, viz., the seducing laborers from each other, may be taken by the unscrupulous to have high authority for its sanction.

5. I venture to feel well assured that His Excellency in Council would not sanction such a state of things as this, and I hope, therefore, that I may seek an authoritative interference with it, and the interposition of some check which may guarantee better considered measures in future for the attainment of the object in view.

No. 116.

ORDER THEREON, 9th April 1862, No. 788.

Referred to Mr. McIvor for report.

(Signed) C. G. MASTER,

Deputy Secretary to Government.

to the Subordinate Judge and to
the Magistrate at Ootacamund
will I think show that questions
of this nature have engaged
the attention of their Consta.

4. Of the Cinchona cultivation
engaged a large amount of labour,
there we must look for the rise
in the value of labour which
follows the competition of a new
and extended industry. Through
even in such a case, where the
government is the cultivator, we
might reasonably look for such
well considered & cautious pro-
ceedings as should least disturb
private interests. But, in the
present case, the wants are so
trifling in comparison with those
interests, that they create in reality
no such competition, and will
demand still less to satisfy them
after the first operations are com-
pleted. The wildness of the
arbitrary increase of the wages of
labour - and by an authority which
in this country has so extraordinary
an influence over the people -
will remain and be replete with
active injury. The seeds of dissa-
tisfaction will be fatally sown;
men will work indifferently under
the idea that they are not fairly
paid; an unsettled feeling will
prevail; and that against which
planters always set their faces
under an instinct of common
safety, viz the seducing labourers
from each other, may be fostered
by

