M.R.O. 14-5,450—22-10-25.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1843 Press / Mis.

(466-467)

Dated 20-7- 1866

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 20th July 1866.

No. 466. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 19th July 1866.

Read the following letter from the Collector of Salem, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated on circuit, Alangayam, Trippattur Talook, 12th July 1866, No. 121:—

1. I have the honor to bring to the Board's notice, that there is much distress in the Salem District, owing to the increasing high prices of grain, and that if the drought continues longer, I am afraid it will end in a serious famine.

2. While measures are being adopted for the relief of the poorest in and around the town of Salem, reports reached me, from almost every Talook, that people are suffering much from want of water and food, and that they are driven to the necessity of eating tamarind stone cunjee, prickly-pear, and roots and herbs, to eke out their scanty supply of food. The report from the Trippattur Talook was so startling, that I was obliged to visit it immediately, and I am now here, at the worst part of the Talook. It is now upwards of eight or nine months since there has been any useful rain here, and though the want of water is not so much felt here as at Trippattur and other places, yet the people are really suffering for want of food. Ryots' lands are all lying waste, and with here and there a trifling exception of cultivation under wells, there is not a green herb to be seen. Without disastrous pressure on the Ryots, they cannot be made to pay the arrears of Government kist. I have, therefore, promised to recommend to the Board the remission of the balance of kist due by the Ryots in these parts, and I shall submit a report shortly on the subject. As it is only the last kist that is due, the amount to be remitted will not be great; but as similar concession may be necessary for other parts of the District, I shall wait for a few days, before submitting a final report as to the extent to which remission will be necessary.

3. Want of water is so much felt in the town of Salem, that I have been obliged to advance 100 Rupees, out of the Local Funds, for sinking temporary wells in different parts of the Salem river, and I request the Board will be pleased to accord their sanction for the same. The amount may be met from the 5,360 Rupees entered under the head "Reserve" in the Local Fund Budget. The river, upon which the Salem town chiefly depends for water, is entirely dry, and almost all the wells in the town are in the same state. In the Salem town public wells, in which there still remains a little water, the people are obliged to scrape it up with cocoanut shells, and it occupies 15 or 20 minutes before a single pot full of water can be collected.

4. I believe that it will be necessary to grant a sum in aid of deepening some of the public wells in Trippattur and other places, and I shall submit a report on this point immediately.

5. To assist the helpless, the inhabitants of the Salem town have opened a Cunjee house in the town, in which two or three hundred paupers are daily fed. The Cunjee house is maintained by local subscriptions and donations, and the example set by the Salem people is followed by the inhabitants of other towns in the District. The divisional Officers, whom I have addressed on the matter, are encouraging and stimulating as much as possible those that can afford to contribute

towards the relief of the poor; but if the present season continues longer, Government aid will become absolutely necessary.

6. In regard to the poor, who are able to work, I am doing my best to give as much employment as possible to them on the Local Fund works. I have also addressed the Superintending Engineer of the Division to do the same; but I am afraid this will not be enough, and I intend shortly requesting the Board to move the Government to accord special sanction for the repair of many irrigation works in this District, which are lying useless for want of repairs, and which would yield five or six per cent. on the estimated outlay.

7. I intend next visiting the neighbouring Talook of Uttangarai, which, I believe, is much worse than this, and as soon as I get into Salem, I will submit a further report on the subject.

---

1. Submitted for the information of Government, in continuation of the Board's Proceedings, dated 6th July 1866, No. 4,609.

2. The Board are glad to find that Mr. Arbuthnott is carrying out their suggestions by anticipation. They have already sanctioned a grant of Rs. 300 for deepening wells on a subsequent application from Mr. Arbuthnott.

3. The suggestion at the conclusion of paragraph 6 of the Collector's letter is well worthy of the consideration of Government. The Board trust that the efforts of the Officers of the Department Public Works and Revenue Department, to find work for the suffering poor of all the Districts, will not be contracted by any Budget difficulties.

No. 467. ORDER THEREON, 20th July 1866, No. 1,843.

Land Revenue

1. The Government trust to receive at an early date the Collector's proposals for providing work for the destitute as a means of their gaining a livelihood.

2. His representations on the subject will receive immediate consideration.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
,, the Collector of Salem.

Exd. T. O'Connor.

No. 1843.
The Govt. trust to receive at an early date the Bd's proposals for providing work for the destitute as a means of their gaining a livelihood
18
His representations on the subject will receive immediate consideration
W.H.

T.B.
17/7

11 Copies to the Bd of Revenue Dept. 26
5 — Collr of Salem

20th July 66.