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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 3214	Press ~~Mis.~~
579. 601	
Dated 23-11-	~~19~~ 1866

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 23rd November 1866.

No. 579. From the Honorable C. PELLY, Member of the Board of Revenue, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Madras, 5th November 1866, No. 1,422.

1. I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the Proceedings of Government, dated 23rd July 1866, No. 739, referring to me for report a letter from the Director General of the Post Office of India, dated 4th July 1866, No. 833, regarding the withdrawal or otherwise of the permission to levy the fee of a fourth of an anna for the delivery of letters in the villages beyond the limits of a Post Office.

2. In my Report to Government, Revenue Department, dated 20th March 1862, No. 1,210, on the revision of Talook Tappal Establishments, I suggested, in paragraph 9, that all letters forwarded beyond the Postal station should be charged with a fee of one-fourth of an anna, to be paid to the person responsible for the delivery of the letter. I at the same time shewed how, with advantage, central villages might be made places for collecting and forwarding letters to the neighbouring villages. I would refer to paragraphs 3 and 9 of that Report, and to paragraphs 67 to 70 in the appendix to it. This plan is worthy of a trial. There should be certain villages at which a box should be kept for receiving letters from neighbouring villages. The letters collected should be sent, at fixed intervals, in a bag made up by the Monigar or other village officer to the nearest Post Office, or to the next centre village en route to the Post Office. Letters received at the Post Office for any rural village should be sent to the centre village, and be there delivered to the parties to whom they are addressed. The fee for delivery should be paid to the man employed by the Monigar for delivering the letter. The person entrusted to carry the bag to or from the centre village should receive hire for the trip at a certain fixed rate. The charge would not be heavy, as it would only be occasional, perhaps once a week. Should the number of letters be large, the question of entertaining a salaried Peon, or even establishing a new Post Office in any centre village, could be entertained.

3. In the revised Talook Tappal Establishment, a letter delivery Peon has been provided for almost every station where a Talook Post has been established. Within the ordinary range of such stations, the letters will be delivered by the Peons without any demand of extra fee; but for the delivery of letters beyond the Postal range, I see no other alternative than that of continuing the fee system, unless Government are prepared to incur a heavy expenditure in the employment of a large staff of delivery Peons.

4. I thought that Police Constables might, with advantage, be employed in conveying letters while on their beats, but the Inspector General of Mofussil Police is opposed to this. The Collector of Tinnevelly informs me that the Beat Constables in his district were employed for some time to deliver the District Gazettes in the villages, and that the punctual delivery had increased the number of subscribers to the Gazette, but that the Inspector General of Police having objected to it, the employment of Beat Constables for the purpose had been stopped.

5. I have obtained from the Collectors copies of their reports to Government on the subject under discussion; with but few exceptions they are in favor of levying the fee, and they are of opinion that the rural inhabitants are quite willing to

pay this small fee for getting their letters safely, and that it affords security for the punctual delivery of letters. The Director General of the Post Office is also strongly in favor of levying the fee, and I concur with him in what he has stated on the subject. Whatever system may be adopted for the villages, the levy of some small fee appears to be inevitable, without which no satisfactory arrangement can be made to ensure, as far as possible, the safe delivery of letters beyond the Postal stations, though in a few districts the work appears to be performed by village servants without any remuneration.

No. 580. From the Collector of Madura, to the Honorable C. PELLY, Member of the Board of Revenue, dated Madura, 3rd November 1866, No. 1,864.

1. In reply to your letter dated the 22nd ultimo, I have the honor to state that only one delivery Peon is allowed to each district with a single exception, and there is generally one District Post Office attached to each talook. The above single Peon has to deliver letters to the inhabitants of the whole talook; receives letters once a week or so, goes in one direction of the talook, delivering letters received to the address of the people in that quarter, while those directed to the people in the other directions are lying idle with him or in the Post Office; and then returns to his head-quarters, to receive the letters there accumulating, and commence his tour again in another direction. The consequence of this system is great delay; while several letters remain undelivered in his such hasty circuit in consequence of the absence of the addressees, and for other causes.

2. I do not see the advantage of having a Post if a letter takes several days to reach its destination lying a few miles off. The only remedy that strikes me is the employment of additional hands to be paid by fees, but the present rate of a quarter of an anna is insufficient to remunerate persons thus employed. I would, therefore, raise it from a quarter to half an anna, as suggested in my letter to you dated the 28th August 1866, No. 1,456.

3. The paid Peon is to deliver letters in the cusbah and in the villages surrounding it, and the fees Peon to deliver letters in the other distant villages. The rural population will not grudge payment of the proposed increased rate of fees, and rather regard the system as a convenience, because by paying a small fee they get their letters at their doors and with despatch. The daily increase of letters sent by post is a proof that people avail themselves largely of the advantage held out to them by the post. If in addition to this, letters are delivered with more expedition, I believe the advantage will be felt more in this time of active trade.

4. The regular or Imperial Post chiefly benefits the residents of towns where it is established, while the District Post administers to the convenience of an immense number of the rural population. The regular post delivers letters only in the town in which it has its head-quarters. I would therefore strongly commend the subject of increasing the fees to your consideration.

No. 1,994.

Submitted to Government, with reference to Honorable C. Pelly's letter, dated 5th November 1866, No. 1,993.

MADRAS,
8th November 1866.

(Signed) C. PELLY,
Member.

No. 581. From the Post Master General, Madras, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Publi Department, Fort Saint George, dated Ootacamund, 4th August 1866, No. 807.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Order of Government No. 739, of the 23rd ultimo, and in reply, to state, that I am decidedly of opinion that the fee of a quarter anna levied under existing rules for the benefit of the deliverer of such non-official district post letters as are sent out for delivery is the safeguard of such letters between the District Post Office of delivery and the hands of the addressee, and if it is discontinued, the chances of delivery to the addressee will be greatly lessened, and that therefore it will be most inexpedient to discontinue the fee in question.

No. 582. From the Collector of Ganjam, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Chetterpore, 25th August 1866, No. 2,134.

1. With reference to the Order of Government, Public Department, dated the 23rd ultimo, No. 739, forwarding, for report, certain papers connected with the question whether it is desirable to retain the fee of three pice authorized to be charged on all letters delivered through the District or Moolky Post Office, I have the honor to state that the levy of this fee was discontinued in this district about three years ago by order of the Post Master General.

2. I agree in opinion with the Post Master General, North-Western Provinces, and support his statements that this extra charge of three pice on every letter delivered by the District Post was very obnoxious to the rural population, who alone were subjected to it, and who looked upon it as an extra and unjust impost. Its realization was attended with much annoyance, and, in many instances, persons refused even paid letters sent from distant places through the regular post for delivery by the District Post, rather than pay this "extra fee" of three pice.

3. Great difficulty was always experienced by the Talook Officers in this district to secure trustworthy persons to walk great distances for the purpose of delivering letters for a fee of three pice each letter.

4. The abolition of the charge was considered a great boon to all concerned-

No. 583. From the Collector of Vizagapatam, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Vizagapatam, 2nd August 1866, No. 612.

1. In reply to G. O., Public Department, No. 739, of 23rd July ultimo, I have the honor to state that the delivery fee for the District Post letters must be continued if the Postal Department in the Provinces is not to break down altogether, for I suppose Government are not prepared to enlist an army of special Peons to do the delivery *gratis*.

2. There is no assessment on the landholders here for the maintenance of the District Post, as in the North-Western Provinces.

No. 584. From the Acting Sub-Collector in charge of the Godavery District, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Cocanada, 29th August 1866, No. 22.

With reference to the Proceedings of the Government, Public Department, No. 739, dated the 23rd July 1866, I have the honor to report that the levy of the

fee of a quarter of an anna was, on the Collector's representation, abolished by the Honorable C. Pelly.—*Vide* letter No. 1,749, dated the 6th October 1864. I see no good grounds for its re-imposition. It is certainly obnoxious to the people. There is the Talook post and village agency available for the work. I think it is hard to ask each ryot and petty dealer in villages to pay one-half of what he would pay for the transit of a letter to any part of India just for its being put into his hands. No such evils as are apprehended in paragraph 2 of the Director General's letter, dated the 31st March, No. 3,590, have arisen from the abolition of the fee. In fact complaints of letters having been missed in the District Post Offices are very rare.

No. 585. From the Collector of the Kistna District, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Masulipatam, 21st August 1866, No. 31.

1. With reference to the Order of Government, Public Department, No. 739, dated 23rd July 1866, regarding the levy of a fee on the delivery of letters in the several districts, I have the honor to state that the practice, as authorized by Rule 17 of General District Post Rules, has been long introduced into this district, and that I see no objection to its continuance.

2. The fee now collected is three pies per letter for letters delivered in places where there is no regular delivering Peon.

3. I think, with the Director General of Post Offices in India, as stated in his letter No. 3,590, dated 31st March 1866, paragraphs 3 and 4, published with the Order under reply, that the levy of the fee tends to secure the safe delivery of letters, and that it has no appreciable effect on the increase of correspondence.

No. 586. From the Acting Collector of Nellore, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Nellore, 5th September 1866, No. 42.

1. I have the honor, with reference to Government Order, No. 739, dated 23rd July 1866, Public Department, to report, as my opinion, that I do not see that any sufficiently valid objection to the levy of a fee for the delivery of letters beyond certain limits from the Post Office, exists.

2. Unless the Postal Establishment is so greatly increased as to admit of all letters being delivered by its servants, which is of course impracticable, I do not see what better course can be adopted than to retain Rule No. XVII. as it exists, which allows the deliverers of letters to receive three pies as a remuneration for their trouble.

No. 587. From the Collector of Cuddapah, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Public Department, Fort Saint George, dated Cuddapah, 3rd September 1866, No. 33.

1. With reference to the Government Order, dated 23rd July 1866, No. 739, I have the honor to report that I am of opinion that the levy of the delivery fee should be abolished, and that another fee in lieu of it at two annas per ten miles should be introduced for the conveyance and delivery of letters at the different villages which are situated at a distance from the District Post Office.

2. The latter course, I believe, will serve as a safeguard for the immediate delivery of letters to the parties residing in the villages; as otherwise, the letters will have to be sent for delivery by Taliars or Village Peons when they appear at the Talook Cutcherry on business, which is uncertain. There is, moreover, a great hardship in the collection of bearing postage on letters sent through the village Peons for delivery, because they are not bound to pay much attention to this additional task.

3. The fee of two annas per every ten miles will be paid by the owners of letters to Peons who may be employed at each District Post Office for the conveyance of letters to the villages without any charge from the Government, and they will be held responsible for their safe delivery, and the collection of bearing postage which they should remit periodically to the Talook Treasury. These Peons will be called "Village Letter Delivery Peons," and they should also give security to a certain amount.

No. 588. From the Collector of Bellary, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Bellary, 17th September 1866, No. 71.

1. With reference to Government Order, dated 23rd July 1866, No. 739, referring certain official correspondence of the Director General of the Post Office of India for report, as to the abolition of the levy of the District Post delivery fee, I have the honor to state that I think the levy of the fee might be discontinued with advantage.

2. It cannot meet the additional charge of the delivery in extensive talooks. It is wholly inadequate as a security for the delivery of the letters; it is of no use as a check against the misappropriation of the letters. If there was an object to do so, the farthing postage to be collected would not weigh against it, and the delivery Peon could as easily stoutly aver that he had delivered the letter for which postage was due, as that for which nothing was owing.

3. It does not appear that a receipt is required from the addressee of a district letter, so that I am unable to see the force of the Director General's hypothesis. In paragraph 2, No. 3,590, dated 31st March 1866, he writes "if a fee has to be collected or accounted for on each letter, &c.," but as the party who has the collection of the fee is also the recipient of it, he could state that he had delivered the letter and received the fee, and there would be only the adverse testimony of the addressee against him. If a receipt for district letters, as for registered letters, has to be signed by the addressee, there would be force in the analogous supposition with regard to district letters.

4. The method I have adopted in this district for the carriage of letters from the cusbah to the out-villages is to have a village packet made up at the cusbah, which the Beat Constable drops on his rounds; the packet is addressed to the Patel, or village head, who is directed to deliver the letters and collect the postage, if any, due, and remit the same to the Cusbah Office. The Constables have nothing to do with the receipt or delivery of letters to their addressees; they may carry a service packet to the Patel on their beat, just as they would a letter from the Inspector to the Station House. It is a very great convenience to the

people, and does no harm to the Police. I have, with the consent of the Superintendents, tried this in more than one district without any bad effects.

No. 589. From the Acting Collector of Kurnool, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Kurnool, 30th July 1866, No. 28.

I have the honor, in reply to the Order of Government, dated 23rd instant, No. 739, to state that though there are doubtless many arguments in favor of the abolition of the District Post delivery fee, I do not see how the delivery of letters beyond the ordinary delivery limits of a Post Office is to be effected without it, unless the Post Offices are prepared to increase the staff of delivery Peons to a considerable extent, and deliver letters free in every village. If the minimum rate of postage was raised from six to eight pice, and half a tolah made a single rate, instead of one-quarter tolah, the Post Office revenue might then be able to meet the additional charge, and what appears to be considered an additional and unfair impost would be done away with.

No. 590. From the Acting Collector of Madras, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Saidapet, 15th September 1866, No. 182.

1. I have the honor, with reference to the Proceedings of Government, No. 739, dated 23rd July 1866, to submit my opinion respecting the system of levying a delivery fee of one pice on every letter carried by Talook Tappal.

2. The Talook Tappal letters in this district are, on receipt, handed by the regular Tappal Gumastahs, to a Talook Tappal Gumastah, who distributes them to a special Peon. The latter delivers them to the addressees at their own houses.

3. The system is not, as far as I can understand, objected to. Natives discern the value of a delivery fee as a means of protecting their correspondence.

4. In regard to the objection that the exaction of a fee counteracts the tendency observed in all Post Offices to an increase in the number of letters transmitted, I beg to observe that such an objection would hold good only if complaints were really made of the fee. That the fee is not found an obnoxious tax, I think is shewn by the statistics of the tappal. In the last half year, out of 24,818 letters sent by the tappal, only 1,170, or one in twenty-five, were refused.

5. I am not aware that traders send to the Mofussil Post Offices for their letters. In cases where they may do so, I imagine it will be found that private messengers are employed to secure expedition, and not on account of the distrust of the Tappal Peons, or of a disinclination to pay the delivery fee.

6. I do not think the collection of the fee is attended with inconvenience.

No. 591. From the Collector of North Arcot, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Chittoor, 20th August 1866, No. 41.

1. In acknowledging receipt of the Proceedings of Government, Public Department, dated 23rd ultimo, No. 739, I have the honor to state that in my opinion the "District Post Delivery Fee" of one pice (a fourth of an anna) should not be abolished.

2. So far as the system has been practically illustrated in this district, it appears to me to have fulfilled the ends to which the Director General adverts in paragraph 7 of his letter embodied in the Proceedings under reply.

3. I am not aware of a single instance in which any one of Captain Battye's objections has come under official cognizance, and my belief is that the levy of this fee does all that it pretends to do towards the facilitation of correspondence in the more rural district.

4. The fact that some 10,000 covers are distributed monthly in these rural tracts through the volunteer agency created by the fee, indicates pretty clearly that the system, so far as it goes, enjoys a fair measure of confidence, and has the acceptance of the community.

5. I had occasion to submit to the Post Master General a proposition for the improvement and extension of postal communications in this district, and in it, if the Government care to refer to it, they will find that I have recommended the retention of this fee. Since that proposition was submitted, I have heard nothing which should induce me to modify the views which I then expressed.

No. 592. From the Collector of South Arcot, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Cuddalore, 15th September 1866, No. 48.

1. In acknowledgment of the Proceedings of Government, dated 23rd July last, No. 127, on the subject of the levy of a fee of one Pice* in addition to any unpaid postage on all letters passing through the District Post, and delivered to the addressees by persons other than the employés of the Post Office, I have the honor to state that my experience is adverse to the retention of the fee on the several grounds already so fully advanced by the different Officers, whose opinions are recorded in the papers accompanying the Government Proceedings.

* 3 Pies.

2. It is of course easy to find fault with, and to point out the defects or errors of any system, while it is often as difficult to substitute a fitting remedy; and in this matter of the District Post delivery which, I fancy, has puzzled so many, I can only see one means of satisfactory solution, and that is by adopting the suggestion of the Government of the North-Western Provinces, viz., to abolish the fee and provide the requisite delivery through the District Post at the Government cost, although in my district I am not prepared to say that the immediate financial loss will be speedily made up by an increase in native correspondence. But that the existing state of things is most unsatisfactory, that complaints are frequent, and that all the evils dwelt on in the already representations of the several opponents of the fee system are as prominent here as in the North-Western Provinces and in other parts of India, is undoubted; and if the highest Post Office authorities in the country are unable to suggest anything satisfactory in substitution, it is not matter of surprise that the Officers of other departments should experience a difficulty in fixing on the precise nature of the change which it is desirable to introduce; and here I beg to draw attention to a suggestion made by my Sub-Collector, Mr. Irvine, in a letter† addressed to me on the subject, and copy of which is enclosed. Mr.

† Dated 11th August 1866, No. 375.

Irvine, in paragraph 6, proposes that instead of half an anna, the postage of all letters passing through or posted in the District Post be raised to one anna as the lowest rate, and that the District Post Office be provided with such establishment as shall enable it to arrange for a weekly or bi-weekly delivery throughout all villages within its range. This would undoubtedly be an improvement on the system at present obtaining, and after a while it is possible that confidence would spring up, and thus lead to a considerable increase of native correspondence; but I can of course see the objections to which this plan is open—first, there would be the increase of fixed postage rate; and, secondly, the enhanced rate would tell unequally, since letters posted from one talook cusbah to another would have to pay the same as letters addressed to distant outlying villages. But in the absence of any other suggestion or more feasible arrangement, the proposal, I think, may deserve consideration, unless the Government, in view of all the difficulties and grievances which surround the question, should finally resolve on taking the matter into their own hands, and bear the entire cost, whatever it might be, of a regular weekly or bi-weekly village delivery throughout the country; and if this be done, I cannot avoid the conclusion that ultimately there would be no real loss to Government, although for the first year or two such loss must undoubtedly be expected. I speak, of course, only of the district over which I preside, and the advantages thus secured would, I think, be cheaply purchased at this cost, while all cause of grievance and discontent now so generally rife, would at once cease.

From the Acting Sub-Collector of South Arcot, to the Collector of South Arcot dated Cuddalore, 11th August 1866, No. 375.

1. I have the honor to acknowledge Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department, dated 23rd July 1866, No. 739, which accompanied your Memorandum of the 30th ultimo, No. 745, and requesting my opinion regarding the rule now in force of collecting a fee of a quarter of an anna upon letters delivered in village beyond the ordinary Postal limits.

2. I fully concur with the Post Master General of the North-West Provinces in his opinion that the fee is most objectionable. It is undoubtedly regarded by the ryots as an unfair impost. They have a feeling, and not an unnatural one, that when they have complied with the Postal rule of pre-paying their letters, the Post Office is bound to delivery for that sum.

3. Moreover, the realization of the fee is attended with great inconvenience to the Post Office servants. They are unable to employ Peons or public servants in many instances to deliver these letters, and frequently, in fact generally (in this district at least), have to trust to stray coolies whom they may induce on the very remote prospect of recovering quarter of an anna on each letter they deliver to relieve the office of packets, which would otherwise be undistributed. There can be no doubt whatever that a large number of these letters never reach their destination and are destroyed, and numbers are returned to the different Offices by the coolies who originally took charge of them, undelivered, because the addressee in many instances foregoes the pleasure of receiving his letter rather than pay even the paltry sum of quarter of an anna for it.

4. The only remedy for this state of things is an increase to the Postal Establishment, and the appointment of a staff of Peons who could at any rate visit all villages regularly, if not frequently, once a week say, there might be a certain and regular delivery, at a moderately increased cost.

5. There can be no doubt that were the ryots to be sure of receiving their letters punctually, there would be a rapid increase of correspondence. It is a known fact that at the present time if any important news is to be communicated from one district or village to another, it is not unfrequently transmitted by private hand, simply because no reliance is placed upon the District Post. As to the Director General's remark that fees might be allowed to police or village servants deliver-

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not

ing letters, I reply that village servants are not at all times available for receiving letters, so the delivery could not be attended with certainty or regularity, and the Police are strictly prohibited from interfering in such matters, and from under any circumstances recovering fees in any shape from the ryots.

6. I am of opinion that a change in the present system is absolutely necessary, and I would propose that for all letters passing through the District Post, one anna instead of half an anna should be the lowest rate of postage. The Post Office might then be enabled to provide a proper establishment of delivery Peons in each district, and ensure at any rate a regular weekly or bi-weekly delivery. I believe this would be found to work better than the present system, and that a rapid increase of correspondence would result from it.

7. Nothing can be worse than the present system, and no harm can be done by giving trial to any other.

No. 593. From the Officiating Collector of Tanjore, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Vellum, Tanjore Talook, 31st August 1866, No. 959.

1. In reply to the Government Proceedings, dated 23rd ultimo, No. 739, I have the honor to state that the District Post letters are delivered in Tanjore by Peons or letter carriers regularly paid, and not by the Police Peons, Taliars, or extra hands, as in former days, consequently the provisions of Rule 17 do not apply to this district.

2. A practice however has arisen, and is still maintained, of the paid-letter carriers demanding a fee on bearing letters, and in some instances also on paid letters, when the Peon thinks he can levy it with impunity from the addressee, but these demands are unauthorized, and must be stopped by proclamation.

3. I would not advocate the introduction or maintenance of this fee; it only leads to mischief. Sivaguru Pillai, the Tahsildar of Combaconum, has, in his report, stated the matter so clearly, and his views so coincide with mine, that I beg to quote his words:—"I am strongly opposed to the levy of this kind of fee in this country. "As far as my experience goes, the permission has led to undue exactions. Many "village people do not care to keep themselves informed of what is going on in the "official world, and may not therefore know what the authorized fee is. The letter "carriers will not fail to take advantage of their ignorance, and I know in some "cases the best informed man in the rural community in his anxiety to get the "news of a distant relation would pay anything the letter carrier would demand "under the plea of his authorized fee, nor would he consider it worth his while to "go up to the authorities to complain of this exaction.

"Any additional expenditure that may be entailed upon Government by "increasing either the present number of letter carriers or their pay will, I am sure, "be more than repaid in a few years by increase of rural correspondence."

No. 594. From the Acting Collector of Trichinopoly, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Trichinopoly, 28th August 1866, No. 38.

1. Referring to the Proceedings of Government, dated 23rd ultimo, No. 739, Public Department, I have the honor to report that there are nine District Post Offices situated in this Collectorate. A Peon is attached to each of these Offices, and it is to this Peon that letters received are entrusted for distribution.

2. As the limit of each District Post Office is large, and it is impossible for any one individual to distribute in person the whole of the letters with promptitude, the Peon above referred to has hitherto been allowed to employ, on his own responsibility, such persons as he may choose for the purpose of aiding him in delivering letters.

3. The Peon is not permitted to levy the additional fee of one pice on letters distributed in the cusbah station of the District Post Offices, as he is paid for this work. The prescribed fee is levied on letters delivered to residents out of the cusbah stations. The amount thus paid is levied by the distributing man employed by the Post Peon, and retained by him as remuneration for his services.

4. No special tax has been imposed or levied from landholders or any other class of men in this Collectorate for the carrying of the District Dâk.

5. I have made careful enquiries, and ascertained that in no instance do merchants, traders, or ryots make special arrangements for the receipt of the delivery of their private letters at any General or Public Post Office instead of using the District Post.

6. The undermentioned figures shew the number of letters received, delivered, and refused in this Collectorate, during the last two years :—

Years.	Number of letters received at District Post Offices.	Number of letters actually distributed.	Number of letters refused.
1	2	3	4
1864	32,032	30,911	1,121
1865	36,015	34,566	1,449

7. From the above it would appear that there has been an increase in the number of letters sent in 1865. The letters under column 4 were refused mainly from the absence or demise of the persons to whom they were addressed. Payment of the additional fee is not the chief cause, and no dissatisfaction, as far as my enquiries have extended, prevails in consequence of the payment of fee allowed by the rules, and no complaint has ever been made in consequence of being compelled to pay the fee allowed under Rule 17.

8. If this fee were to be dispensed with, the delivery of letters would be seriously delayed, and the public put to much inconvenience. In fact I do not see, without extra hands being employed by the Postal Department, how letters to villagers distant from the District Post Offices would ever be delivered at all.

9. I would therefore recommend that the Rule 17 should be retained.

No. 595. From the Collector of Madura, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Madura, 2nd August 1866, No. 1,287.

Having reference to the Order of Government in the Public Department, dated the 23rd July, No. 739, I have the honor to report that the levy of the fee of a quarter of an anna for delivery of letters through the District Post should be continued, and the fees given to non-official servants employed for delivery of letters. The number of delivery Peons at present employed is insufficient, and unless additional hands are employed, letters cannot be delivered in all the important villages. The rural population do not grudge payment of the fees, and rather regard the system as a convenient one, because by paying a small fee, they expect their letters delivered at their villages, which are often situated at great distances from the Talook Post Offices. The system has been in vogue for some time, and I have never heard any objection raised regarding it by any person.

No. 596. From the Collector of Tinnevelly, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Tinnevelly, 4th August 1866, No. 303.

With reference to Government Proceedings No. 739, dated 23rd July 1866, I have the honor to inform you that about 200,000 letters are delivered annually in this district; the fee for delivery is now three pies per letter, but I have reason to know that more is extorted wherever possible, and that great delay occurs in the delivery of the letters. Every village in the district is visited almost daily by Police Constables, and I beg to propose that these Constables be made the letter carriers, and be allowed to levy a fee of half additional to the postage charged on the letters they deliver. This plan would ensure delivery and prevent extortion, and by adding something to their salaries, would be an inducement to the Constables to visit all the villages on their beat, and to make the acquaintance of many people, of whose existence they might not be otherwise aware.

No. 597. From the Collector of Coimbatore, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Ootacamund, 13th August 1866, No. 82.

In reply to Proceedings of Government, Revenue Department, and their Order thereon, dated 23rd July 1866, No. 739, I have the honor to inform you, with reference to the levy of one pice (quarter of an anna) on letters delivered in the district beyond the limits of the regular post delivery, that I have never heard any one object to this fee. It is undoubtedly small in amount when compared with the advantage obtained, and I believe that the majority of native correspondents would gladly pay double and even treble the sum to secure the safe delivery of the letters. The number of registered letters received in my Office confirms me in this opinion.

No. 598. From the Collector of Salem, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Salem, 3rd August 1866, No. 52.

1. I have the honor to submit report called for in Government Order, dated 23rd July 1866, No. 739, on the question of the abolition of the delivery fee of one pice (quarter of an anna) now levied on each letter under Rule 17 of General District Post Rules.

Salem.	Kistnagherry.	2. In several of the Salem District Post Offices (noted marginally) there are delivery Peons, and no fee is payable at these places where the addressee lives within two miles of the Post Office.
Namkul.	Tripattur.	
Ahtur.	Usur.	
Trichengode.	Uttengherry.	
Darampury.		

3. Where there is no delivery Peon, or where the distance exceeds two miles, letters are entrusted generally to Taliaries or village toties for delivery, and the fee of one pice is leviable on each letter.

4. When the distance is considerable, an accumulation of letters is generally allowed to take place, and the letters are delivered in many neighbouring villages by one man, whose sole remuneration consists of the delivery fee.

5. I think the present delivery fee ought to be continued, for unless Government are prepared to incur the heavy charge of paying a large number of delivery Peons, I see no other way in which letters can be delivered at great distances from the District Post Office, and even if Government are prepared to incur this additional charge, I do not think that letters would be so safely or surely delivered as under the present system.

No. 599. From the Collector of South Canara, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Public Department, Fort Saint George, dated Mangalore, 14th August 1866, No. 34.

1. With reference to the Order of Government, dated 23rd July last, No. 739, calling for a report on the advisability of the continuance or abolition of the levy of one pice or quarter of an anna upon letters delivered beyond the limits of a Post delivery, I have the honor to submit my opinion as follows.

2. Upon an attentive consideration of the several arguments adduced in the correspondence embodied in the above quoted Proceedings of Government in favor of, and against, the question of levying the additional fee of quarter of an anna upon each letter, I am inclined to agree with the opinion of the Director General of the Post Offices of India, expressed in his letter of the 31st March 1866, No. 3,500, that the levy of such fee should be maintained.

3. It can hardly be expected that the letter carrier attached to a District Post should have to walk some miles for the delivery of one or two letters. He must therefore be under great temptation to destroy the letters rather than undergo the trouble of himself conveying the same. The delivery of such letter by the village watchers or beat constables, and whose ordinary duties lead them to villages in the interior, can be easily and readily effected, and the remuneration they may receive for this, though but small, will, in my opinion, be a safeguard against the temptation of destroying letters.

4. The addressees of such letters will not, in my opinion, look upon such impost as unjustifiable, as at a very small cost they find their letters delivered at their doors, and I understand that the people generally are quite satisfied with the present arrangement.

No. 600. From the Collector of Malabar, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated on Circuit, Angadipurom, Walluvanad Talook, 14th September 1866, No. 123.

In reply to Government Order, dated 23rd July last, No. 739, I have the honor to observe that the Postal delivery fee of one pice (a fourth of an anna) does not appear to have been even demanded in Malabar, and I would not recommend the introduction of the impost.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) J. GROSE,

Under Secretary to Government.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.
FORT SAINT GEORGE,
23rd November 1866.

No. 3,214.

No. 601.
To

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POST OFFICES IN INDIA.

SIR,

Miscellaneous.

1. I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 4th July last, No. 833, regarding the retention or abolition of the District Post Delivery Fee.

2. I am to state, in reply, that the Governor in Council is of opinion that the fee should be abolished.

3. The fee is so small that unless the letters are allowed to accumulate, it is not worth the while of a person to undertake the duty of delivery at any distance from the Postal town; such accumulation of course involves more or less of delay, but if not allowed, the temptation to destroy the letters rather than undertake the trouble of delivery is obvious.

4. But while thus insufficient to secure rapidity and certainty of delivery, the fee is greatly disproportionate to the postage charged. A single letter is conveyed from Peshawur to Cape Comorin for six pice, and to charge half as much more for delivery in a village a few miles beyond postal limits must naturally be regarded as inequitable.

5. The Governor in Council considers that the Postal Department should itself undertake the duty of delivery, free of any special charge, and believes that the impulse which would thus be given to rural correspondence would reduce the additional expense within very moderate limits.

6. When the District Post of Madras was revised in November 1855 at a total cost of Rupees 1,19,778 per annum, it was estimated that the number of official and private covers posted at District Post Offices was then 1,800,000,* and that of covers received for delivery 2,300,000,† during the year, so that the establishment is practically self-supporting, even with its limited organization. According to your Annual Report for 1864-65, the Post Office in that year yielded a *net* surplus of thirty-five lacs of Rupees, and funds cannot therefore be said to be wanting for the measure now proposed.

* Official 1,100,000
Private 700,000

† Official 1,200,000
Private 1,100,000

7. I am to forward copies of the Reports of the Officers to whom your letter was sent for an expression of their opinion.

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

(Signed) J. D. SIM,

Secretary to Government.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

The Government of the North Western Provinces having recommended the abolition of the District Post Delivery-Fee authorized by Rule 17. General District Post Rules, the Director General of the Post-office of India was desired to ascertain the opinions of the other Local Governments as to whether it is desirable to continue the fee or not.

* Letters will be delivered by such persons and under such rules as the Local Govt. shall from time to time, determine.
Every person to whom any District Post Letters may be delivered is authorized to receive, a fee of one pice, (a fourth of an anna) for his own use, in addition to any unpaid postage that may be due on the

2. The letter of the Director General was referred by the Madras Govt. 11 July last, to the Hon. C. Selby, the Revenue Dept. the Post Master General, and all Collectors for report.

3. The Collectors * named in the margin are of opinion that the levy of the fee in question should be discontinued.

* Bellary.
South Arcot
Cuddapah
Tinnevelly.

4. The Collector of Bellary is of opinion the charge cannot meet the additional expense of delivery - that it is wholly inadequate as a security for delivery, or against misappropriation.
The Collector of Tinnevelly represents that under the present system extortion and malpractices prevail, and that delay is great.

It is represented that in this large District the fee is considered an unjust and Burthensome impost.

Both Mr. Wedderburn and Mr. Puckle recommend that the Constables be employed to take the Letters from the District Post Office, and deliver them in the several villages.

This practice, it appears, is now in force in Bellary, where the Letters are delivered by the Head of the Village who collects the postage &c., and remits the amount to the District Post Office.

It does not appear that the Constable receive any remuneration in this District.

Mr. Puckle would allow the Constable to charge a fee, of one half in addition to the postage, for their own use - being of opinion that the Constables would be thereby induced to visit every village & would have opportunities of becoming acquainted with the people.

The Collector of Cuddapah would charge a fee of 2 annas per every 10 miles beyond the limits of the District Post offices the said fee to be paid by the delivering Peon who should be held responsible for the same with the transit-postage due to the Talicu Treasury.

North Arcot.	
South Canara.	
Tanjore	
Salem	
Trichinopoly	
Coimbatore	
Madura.	
Madras.	
Kurnool	
Vizagapatam	
Kistna	

The Collector of South Arcot would make one anna the lowest rate payable on all letters passing thro' the District Post, and would arrange for a weekly or bi-weekly delivery in every village: or that Govt. bear the entire cost of such delivery he is of opinion that increase of correspondence would shortly make the latter course remunerative.

The Post Master General, and the Collectors marginally noted, are in favour of the continuance of the fee.

The Collector of North Arcot states that the levy has answered the end for which it was intended.

In South Canara the same practice (noticed in para 2 of the foregoing) as holding in Bellary, by which Beat Constables and village watchers deliver letters, prevails.

In Salem the extra fee is paid for village watchers delivering letters beyond 2 miles from the District Post Offices, and the Collector reports that even if Govt. undertook the delivery, letters would not reach so speedily or surely as at present.

the Principle, one Delivery Peon is kept at each Cutcherie Station, and he makes his own arrangements for the delivery of Letters beyond the Station, the persons appointed by him retaining the fee.

Madura and Madras

The Collectors of Coimbatore, State that the fee is not objected to, [illegible] and does not bear hardly on the people.

The Collector of Kurnool, Nizampatam and the Kistna Districts are of opinion that, even if there be objections to the system, it must be continued. The Collector of Kurnool suggests that if raised the Minimum rate from 6 to 8 pies and making ½ a Tolah a single weight the Postal Revenue might be increased sufficiently to meet the additional charge involved by free delivery.

6. Malabar.

The levy of the fee has never been introduced in Malabar and the Collector does not recommend the introduction of it in future.

7. The fee system is not in force in the Districts noted in the margin: District Post Letters being delivered gratuitously by paid letter carriers in Tanjore, and the fee having been abolished in the Godavery and Ganjam Districts some 2 or 3 years ago.

Tanjore.
Godavery.
Ganjam.

The Collector of Tanjore does not recommend the introduction of the fee, considering that it would lead to opportunities for extortion. The Collectors of the Godavery, and Ganjam are averse to the re-imposition of the fee: the Collector of Godavery states that the levy was very obnoxious to the people and difficult to realize.

8.* The Hon. C. Pelly sees no other course than to continue the levy of the present fee, unless Government are prepared to incur a heavy expenditure in maintaining a staff of salaried Peons: he is of opinion that whatever system is adopted a small fee must still be levied to ensure the safe delivery of letters beyond the Postal limits.

The system of Entrusting these letters to Beat Constables had recommended itself to his notice, but understanding that, having

Note.

* Mr. Pelly has received copies of the replies from Collectors on the subject, and agrees with the majority, who as he says are in favour of retaining the fee.

and a very superior Arabic Scholar
WDy

Rec. Dep^t 25^th March 1862
No 1210.

been tried and found successful in Tinnevelly, it has been abandoned in consequence of the disapproval of the Inspector General of Police, he does not further consider it.

Mr. Petty calls attention to a proposal made in his report of Govt. on the revision of the Talaq Tappal Establishment, that there shd be certain Central villages at which a box should be kept for receiving letters from neighbouring villages: the bag to be made up by the Maniagar and sent by the nearest Post office, or next Central village on route for the Post office, say once a week the person entrusted with the bag to receive a fixed sum for each trip, and the person delivering the letter to the addressee to be employed by the Maniagar, & receive the delivery fee.

The Post Master General is strongly in favour of the retention of the fee, as the only guarantee for the safety of the letter from the time it leaves the District Post office till it reaches its destination.

6. In no District in the Presidency is there an assessment on land-holders for the maintenance of the District Post, as there is in the North West Provinces.

HB.

For Orders.

I have always been against the system of levying a fee for delivery of letters in villages. A letter (surely) is carried from Pershore or Droitwich for the price of delivery in a village a few miles out of Worcester for the same, the carrier is allowed to charge 3 pence & to a poor it is taken without charge of the only act distinction from the P.O.

I am glad that we shall dispense with delivery by Peons of letters which cost little

I see in favor of abolishing the three pice fee. but I do not think it would be wise to abolish it in any Presidency in which it now exists. The attempt to collect this small sum would cause complications & delay which

9.

Qy. a guarantee at all?
Establishments &c.
WDy

Revenue Department

23rd June 1866

No 3214.

To

The Secretary to the Govt of India

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 4th July last, No 833 regarding the retention or abolition of the District Post Delivery Fee.

I am to state in reply, that the Governor in Council is of opinion that the fee should be abolished.

The fee is so small that unless the letters are allowed to accumulate it is

1 C. Ag. Rec. 24 Oct.

1st Copy

Fin Dept

Extra - for there are but many letters with which we do not already hold communication for further particulars, at least once a week. and in from districts letters often are detained without fee - As to the fee preventing distribution & any delivery of letters that argument with held from only on the supposition that the letters are kept in the office till there are enough of them to make it really worth a messenger's while to start on a tour of delivery - I am confident that he should from time to time send by Parcel Post a certain number of letters to the principal towns

On official covers - The number of letters exceeds 1/15000 per an: and the average in the 2 principal towns would

being out of a census village the 23 less

If letters are for delivery, the receipt which are a source of profit by the G.P.O.

I think it therefore that the rule should

be strictly framed, or if retained for time, be retained only in the case of letters not delivered

Cpl Stos

is not worth the while
of a person to undertake
the duty of delivery at
any distance from the postal
town - such accumulation
of course involves more or less
of delay - but if ~~they are~~ not
allowed ~~to accumulate~~, the
temptation to destroy the let-
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delivery, free of any special
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total cost of Rs [illegible]
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District

District Post offices was
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that the establishment is
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even with its limited orga-
nisation. According to your
annual report for 1864/5 the
Post office in that year yielded
a net surplus of thirty five
lacs of Rupees, and funds
cannot therefore be said to be
wanting for the measures
now proposed.

I am to forward copies
of the reports of the officers
to whom your letter was sent
for an expression of their opinion.

I have &c

A.O.
3

× Official 1100,000
Private 700,000

o Official 1200,000
Private 1100,000.

Received 1866 Despatch
Post Office for November

No 3214

To

The Director General of
Post Offices in India
Dy 20th November 1866

Despatch regarding
the introduction of Uniform
Post Delivery Fee proposed
to be made in India

A 577 @ 801

L