M.R.O. 14-5,450—22-10-25.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 3359 — Press Mis.

202.203

Dated 13 — 12 — 1866.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

3359

No. 202. Read the following letter from the Collector of South Arcot, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Cuddalore, 20th November 1866, No. 60 :—

1. I am in receipt of the Orders of Government, No. 2,940, dated 30th ultimo, recorded on a letter from the Famine Relief Committee at Madras, and I am required to report, first, whether the impression of Government be correct that subscriptions had been raised in South Arcot in the expectation that a sum equivalent would be contributed by Government for local necessities ; and, secondly, I am requested to state the expense actually incurred in relieving each adult.

2. In answer to the first point, I have the honor to refer to my previous letter to Government, under date the 20th September, No. 50, on which their Orders of the 9th October, No. 2,717, were passed. That letter very decidedly conveyed the feelings and wishes of the general public, as expressed at the Meeting of subscribers, to which I particularly referred ; and I have only to add that the impression of Government could be no other than that which they arrived at, and on which they were pleased to acquiesce in my proposal for a local grant.

3. As regards the expense incurred for each adult, I have to state, from the accounts of relief afforded up to the close of the past month of October, and which were laid before our last Relief Meeting, that 138,748 persons, including children, were fed at an average cost per head of 5¼ Pies, or 6 Pies per head inclusive of *certain old pensioners* and destitute widows and children in Old Town, as particularized in the margin,* making the total number of persons relieved 143,473.

* 135 Pensioners, Europeans and East Indians, fed from 27th September to 31st October, at a total cost of Rupees 309-5-7, being on an average of 1 Anna and 1 Pie per man per day.

4. In August last I thought it right in my detailed instructions to the Divisional and Talook Officers, directing the organization of Relief Houses, to fix a maximum of 2 Annas as the total cost of feeding each adult, as at that time every thing looked so threatening, and prices had already reached such an unprecedented high rate, that it was impossible to calculate what form the distress might take, or what price grain of all kinds might eventually attain ; and at the same time that I issued these instructions, I also made it generally understood that I expected a proper discretion would be exercised, and that no further sum would be expended than that necessary to provide each really necessitous person with one meal a day, and that this has been done is satisfactorily shewn by the result, and if Government desire it, the details of expenditure can be laid before them.

5. Although the ratio of cost of relief afforded has not hitherto been uniform, it has only averaged what I have stated, and Government will now be able to judge whether there has been any needless extravagance in the measures adopted to meet the past distress.

6. I confess I have been much surprised at the letter of the Madras Famine Relief Committee, and I cannot account for their sudden change of action in reference to my letter of the 20th September last, copy of which was sent to them simultaneously with its despatch to Government, and when they took no objection to it as will be seen by their reply†, a copy of which is enclosed, and I am at a loss

† Dated 26th September 1866, No. 244.

to understand their present opposition to the liberal intentions of Government towards our local Committee, and especially too as the funds at their own disposal are likely thereby so largely to benefit. I leave to Government to say whether the Committee's remarks on my letter of the 20th September are correct or just. I was simply conveying the views of the subscribers, as already stated, and I submit that my letter was clear and explicit on every point, and I am wholly unable to discover the misconception attributed to me, and equally so the alleged misunderstanding on the part of Government.

7. It is important to bear in mind that South Arcot took the initiative in measures for relieving its own distress, and that the first Meeting was convened by me before the issue of the Government Orders of the 25th July last, as will be found on reference to my letter to Government of the 24th of that month, with which I forwarded copy of a notice I had circulated soliciting the public interest and sympathy in the move, and the object of that letter was expressly to obtain the aid of Government in supplement of our local contributions, and therefore there was ample data before Government for stating in their Order of the 9th October, now under consideration, that "the subscribers were led to believe that Government would add a sum equivalent to their subscriptions for exclusively local purposes."

No. 203. ORDER THEREON, 13th December 1866, No. 3,359.

Miscellaneous.

Communicated to the Famine Relief Committee.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. GROSE,
Under Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Relief Committee
,, the Board of Revenue.
,, the Collector of South Arcot.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

Famine Relief Fund

No 244.

Madras 26th September 1866.

Extract from the Proceedings of the General Famine Relief Committee held on the 24th September 1866.

IX Read letter from the Collector of South Arcot dated 20th September 1866 enclosing a copy of a letter to Government in which he reports very favorably of the prospects of his District proposes to act independently of the Relief Committee, and requests that the Government donations equivalent to the local subscriptions of upwards of Rupees 12,000 may be granted to the local Committee in Monthly grants equivalent to the local collections.

The Committee will await the orders of Government on Mr. Reade's letter. They resolve however, to point out to

Mr Reide that the local Committee are quite Competent to dispose of local subscriptions even though they do act in concert with the General Committee in relieving the distress and that it is quite unnecessary to transfer to the General Fund all sums locally raised in a distressed District.

/A true Copy & Extract/

/Signed/ R. R. Dalyell
Secretary

To
The Collector of South Arcot

/True Copy/
Charles Lushington
Collector

Rev. 4221/1866

From the Collector of South Arcot

To the Secretary to Government Madras

Dated 20th November 1866

Rec'd 26th

No. 60

Enclosure 1

Reporting on the several points referred to in Government Proceedings of 30th ultimo No. 2940 in connection with the measures to be adopted in South Arcot for the relief of the indigent poor.

Rec'd 3359, 13th Dec.

With order

Rec'd 3359.

Copy of Mr Fraser Rep. of Proceedings

Ry. to the Famine Rep. Committee Dec. 1866

14 — 2nd of Annexure

1 — Collr of South Arcot

No. 202 & 203

Rec'd 1st Dec. 1866

Rec. 25th July 1866 No. 503

" 30th July 1866 No. 530 & 531

" 9th October 1866 No. 193 & 194

" 30th October 1866 No. 707 & 708

Rec. 4221/1866

From the Collector of South Arcot

Dated 13th Dec. 1866

Rec'd 20th

No. 2940

Letter from the Secretary to the Famine Relief Committee

Dated 20th November 1866

Rec'd 24th

Requesting to be furnished with a Report on the measures adopted in South Arcot for the relief of the indigent poor.

Rec'd 3359, 13th Dec.

Ans. 30th Oct. 1866

Rec'd 29th

9614/RH/80