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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Financial Department,
20th September 1872.*

No. 129. Read the following letter from the Acting President of the Municipal Commission, Madura, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Madura, 22nd August 1872, No. 23:—

I have the honour to forward, herewith, the report, with nine enclosures, of the Dindigul Municipal Commissioners for the year 1871-72 with the prescribed statements and a list of Commissioners as called for in the official memorandum of the Under Secretary to Government dated 31st July 1872, No. 207.

2. Owing to the recent death of two non-official members of the Municipal Commission the number of official Commissioners exceeds the number of non-officials. To remedy this illegality Mr. Bliss proposes shortly to recommend the appointment of additional non-official members, and I have requested him to expedite his proposals.

Report on the working of the Towns' Improvement Act (III. of 1871) in the town of Dindigul for the year 1871-72, with statements prepared according to the forms prescribed by Government in their Orders Nos. 1646, dated 28th October last, Public Department, and 627, dated 4th May 1872, Financial Department, approved by the Commissioners at a Meeting held on the 8th August 1872.

The old Act having remained in force up to 30th April 1871 the year under report contained eleven months only, viz., from 1st May 1871 to 31st March 1872.

2. The opening balance at the commencement of the year was Rupees 2,493-11-3; the actual receipts of the year aggregated Rupees 8,212-7-1, so that the total sum at the disposal of the Commissioners was Rupees 11,443-2-4. The total of expenditure was Rupees 6,412-0-10 and the balance in hand at the end of the year Rupees 5,031-1-6, as marginally noted.

3. The large increase in the total receipts of the year under report over those of previous years is due to the high rates at which the toll contracts were let and to the receipt from Government of a sum of Rupees 2,132 on account of contributions under the old Act for several preceding years, and of cost of Police huts, &c., refunded.

4. The following remarks are explanatory of such entries in the enclosed statements as appear to call for notice.

5. *Statement I., Collections.*—The collection under the head of "House-tax" including the arrears amounted to Rupees 992-15-1. There was an outstanding balance at the end of the year of Rupees 151-13-4, or eighteen per cent. on the estimated total receipts of the year under this head (Rupees 825). This was owing to the collection having been suspended for about three months in the middle of the year, during which the accounts of the tax-collector were under examination in consequence of the discovery of certain irregularities. This balance has since been reduced by subsequent collections to Rupees 62-1-9 (or seven per cent. on the demand), which is also in course of collection.

6. The receipts under the head of "Tolls" amounted to Rupees 4,555 against an estimate of Rupees 3,800. The increase may be attributed to the increase of traffic, which has steadily continued since the road *via* Dindigul between Madura and Caroor has been completed.

7. *Statement II., Expenditure—Grant I., Public Works.*—A sum of Rupees 1,000 was provided in the Budget for making a road to the Railway station; but was not required to be spent, the site finally selected for the station being contiguous to an existing main road leading out of the town. The only expenditure on new roads was, therefore, in bridging and otherwise improving a cart track which ran from the north of the town into the road leading to the Railway station and the open ground at Nagulunaikampatti, where the great weekly fair is held.

8. A sum of Rupees 1,750 was spent on the market during the year under report. The building was completed before the end of the year, and forty-four out of fifty stalls were let out from the beginning of the current year for Rupees 61-13-0 per mensem. Of the forty-four stalls, which have been let sixteen are occupied by butchers and the rest by dealers in grain, fruit, vegetables, and other miscellaneous articles. The expenditure on the building up to the close of the past year was Rupees 2,550, and Rupees 503-2-1 were then due to the contractor, and have since been paid. The total cost of the market has thus been Rupees 3,053-2-1, exclusive of Rupees 385-1-0 paid for the purchase of its site and a considerable space around it formerly occupied by Pariah houses and in a very filthy state, and Rupees 375-12-6, the cost of cleansing out, enlarging, deepening, and walling in a large old well close by, which is not only useful as affording water for the daily washing of the butchers' stalls but for the domestic supply of the neighbourhood. Fifty stalls having, as stated above, been built for the sum of Rupees 3,053, the average cost of each has been Rupees 61. This is a very moderate expenditure, the Commissioners think, considering that the twenty-two butchers' stalls and the drains leading from them are laid with cut-stone pointed with asphalt and provided with a sufficient supply of hooks for hanging meat, and the remaining stalls are furnished with substantial wooden shutters with hasps and bars.

9. On the ground round the market purchased by the Commissioners and cleared of houses the erection of a separate substantial tiled shed has been commenced for the accommodation of petty dealers in vegetables, betel, &c. A further portion of the same ground will be occupied by a shed and enclosed yard for the sale of grass, straw, and firewood, the vendors of which together with the petty dealers in vegetables and betel now carry on their trade without shelter in the open streets to the great obstruction of traffic. For the remainder of this ground, which the Commissioners propose to sell for building lots, they anticipate that, owing to the improvement which has been made in the neighbourhood, they will obtain a sufficient price to nearly, or quite, reimburse the outlay they have made in acquiring it.

10. In connexion with the market and in a retired place about 200 yards from it there was commenced during the year the erection of a slaughter-house at an estimated cost of Rupees 750, which includes flooring with cut-stone in asphalt and the construction of a conduit for the supply of water from the same well as has been mentioned above. The expenditure on the slaughter-house was Rupees 300 during the year under report. The building is now nearly finished. On its completion it is proposed to charge a small fee of 2 or 3 Pies for each animal slaughtered therein. This will about pay for the cost of cleansing the building and maintaining it in repair.

11. The result of the operations undertaken in this part of the town may be anticipated to be that for an expenditure of about Rupees 5,000 thirty-eight scattered huts will have been cleared away and the ground occupied by them cleansed and laid out in streets; a market containing fifty stalls, a commodious slaughter-house, a shed for petty dealers, and a yard and shed for the sale of straw, &c., erected in a substantial manner; and a good supply of water provided for the cleansing of the market and slaughter-house. Even if this expenditure was not expected to bring in any returns the Commissioners think that it would have been justified in consideration of the great convenience that the existence of a market, &c., is to the inhabitants of the town. They anticipate, however, a clear profit of over ten per cent. on the expenditure after making ample provision for the necessary establishments and for repairs.

12. A payment of Rupees 500 was made to the Rev. E. Chester as a grant-in-aid towards the erection of dispensary buildings, as approved by Government in paragraph 3 of their Order dated 21st June 1871, No. 892, Public Department, and with reference to the Proceedings of the Local Fund Board and Municipal Commissioners marginally noted. Government having already approved of this payment it was made at once without waiting for their orders on the Local Fund Budget of the current year, in which the same question came under consideration (*vide* Government Orders dated 21st June 1871, No. 893, Public Department, and 23rd March and 30th May 1872, Nos. 356 and 727, respectively, Financial Department.)

Proceedings of the Local Fund Board at the meeting held on the 28th October 1871.
Proceedings of the Municipal Commissioners at the meeting held on the 14th November 1871.

13. *Repairs.*—Rupees 541-10-1 were spent in the maintenance of roads and in repairing tunnels, the Budget provision being Rupees 500.

14. *Grant II., Education.*—The Budget provision was Rupees 400 for results' grants, but no expenditure was made as no bills were received from the Educational Department during the year.

15. *Grant III., Sanitation and Medical Services.*—The estimate and expenditure under this head amounted to Rupees 1,628 and Rupees 1,642-14-0, respectively. A further payment of Rupees 166-10-8 has, however, been made since the end of the year on account of the Municipality's share of the Rupees 50 per mensem drawn by Mr. Chester for the support of his dispensary from May 1871 to February 1872 and debited in the proportion of two-thirds and one-third to the Local and Municipal Funds, respectively, in accordance with Government Order No. 491, dated 17th April 1871, Public Department.

16. *Grants IV. and V.*—These require no remark except as to the entry of Rupees 95-9-0 for law expenses, which have been incurred on account of the realization of the amount decreed to be paid to the Municipal Commissioners by a late defaulting toll-contractor. His property being chiefly situated in the Coimbatore District considerable difficulty has been experienced in ascertaining its situation and from claims set up by third parties to portions of it which have been attached. There can be no doubt that if the man could be arrested he would pay what he owes without delay; but the peons of the Caroor District Munsif's Court seem either unable or unwilling to apprehend him on the warrants which have been issued for the purpose.

17. *Statement II.-A.*—This is a detailed statement of expenditure on works and requires no further remarks than have been given above (paragraphs 7 to 13).

18. *Statement II.-B.*—No entries are made under the following heads for the following reasons:—

Grant I.—No separate establishment is maintained. The conservancy employes sweep up the streets, remove rubbish, &c., in the mornings, and attend to the maintenance of roads, &c., in the afternoons.

Grant II.—No schools have been established by the Municipal Commissioners as they are of opinion that none are required, the town being well supplied with schools of the lower class.

Grant III.-1.—No Municipal dispensary is maintained; but the Commissioners contribute to the support of Mr. Chester's dispensary.

19. The other items in this statement and in *Statement III.* appear to require no remark.

20. *Statement IV.*—The reason of the small collection of the current demand on account of the rate on houses, &c., has been given above in paragraph 4.

21. A Committee has been appointed to scrutinize the lists of arrears and to take steps for recovering such of them as may appear likely to be realized and to write off the remainder.

22. As directed in the Order of Government marginally noted the Commissioners now proceed to notice the operations of the dispensary maintained by the Rev. E. Chester and partly supported from the Municipal funds.

23. From that gentleman's report for the Calendar year 1871 it appears that during the preceding twelve months 6059 cases came under treatment, of which 3224 were medical cases, 2355 surgical, 351 both surgical and medical, and 149 cases of vaccination.

24. Of the total number of patients eighty-eight were Europeans and East Indians, 1762 were Native Christians, 453 Mahomedans, and 3756 Hindoos: 103 were in and the remainder out-patients. The propriety of classifying the patients partly according to race and partly according to religion is not apparent.

25. Thirty-three midwifery cases were brought under treatment. This number is but small; but will doubtless increase now that a Lying-in Hospital has been completed and opened for the reception of patients, which was not the case during the period under report.

26. The financial accounts rendered by Mr. Chester are not clear, including, as they do, in one statement expenditure on both capital and current accounts. It was intended to abstract them in

Proceedings of Government, Financial Department, dated 2nd March 1872, No. 209.

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this office; but Mr. Chester, after promising the Vice-President to furnish the necessary information, has omitted to do so. The Commissioners can only say, therefore, with regard to these accounts, that the receipts of the year were Rupees 3,192-12-3, of which Rupees 2,128-6-3 were contributions from public, and Rupees 764-5-0 only from private sources. The total of expenditure was Rupees 3,175-4-7, not including an opening deficit of Rupees 211-8-3. Of this, Rupees 1,751 were spent on permanent buildings, Rupees 804 on establishments, Rupees 498-15-3 on medicines, Rupees 33-12-10 on diet of pauper patients, and Rupees 81-8-6 on sundries; 6059 patients were, therefore, treated at an average cost of Annas 3-8 each, which appears moderate.

Proceedings of Government, Financial Department, dated 4th May 1873, No. 677.

27. In conclusion, the Commissioners beg to submit the following remarks on the subject mentioned in the Order of Government marginally noted, the form forwarded wherewith has been filled up and is enclosed.

28. The Commissioners have made careful inquiry as to the feeling of the townspeople with regard to Municipal institutions and have reluctantly arrived at the opinion that the great mass of the people would rather they did not exist. The more intelligent, they believe, fully appreciate the benefits which are involved in the efficient cleansing of the town and the repair of the roads, which are the principal objects of the Commissioners' care, and willingly pay, to secure these benefits, the moderate taxes which are assessed upon them; but the majority—though not murmuring at the payments they are called upon to make, which they look on as imposed by fate in the shape of the Sircar and as no more to be escaped or complained of than anything else which is inevitable, and to which the experience of nearly six years has to a great extent habituated them—do not appreciate the benefits which are secured by efficient Municipal administration. They not only object, as a matter of course, to paying taxes no matter how small, but do not object to dirty streets and bad roads, for they have never known better; and they are too unintelligent to connect in their own minds the facts that efficient sanitation means in the long run a low rate and an increased standard of health and happiness for the whole community. On the whole, the Commissioners are forced to this conclusion that, should the stimulus which is now afforded to Municipal institutions by the connexion therewith of Government and Government servants in considerable numbers be withdrawn, they would be found not to possess sufficient vitality and not to have obtained sufficient hold on the people generally to maintain an independent existence. This is much to be regretted, but is not to be wondered at. Local self-government has flourished spontaneously and been a success in but few countries and not at all periods of the history of even those few, and it would be too much to expect that it should at once be accepted and appreciated by the masses in India when up to this day it is as much dependent on State support or control in some European countries as it now is, and for years must continue to be, here.

29. As to the effect of the levy of tolls on the traffic of the country the experience of the Commissioners has been that the traffic passing through Dindigul has steadily continued to increase in spite of the levy of tolls and of a series of bad seasons in the taluk. They have no traffic returns by which they can prove the correctness of their opinion, the collection of tolls having always been farmed; but the fact is notorious and is known to all who remember the place as it was a few years ago. The marginal statement of the proceeds of the tolls for the five years for which they have been levied supports the above view; but requires the explanation that the rates at which the contracts were let were at first so much too high that the contractor became a defaulter to a serious amount in 1868-69.

and the competition for the following year's contract was naturally much less keen than before in consequence of the discredit thrown on the probability of the realization of a good profit by his virtual bankruptcy. The reasons why traffic has so considerably increased as it is known to have done are two—first, the general increase in the prosperity of the people and the amount of trade and travelling done in the country, and, secondly, the making of the road from Dindigul to Caroor

* The death-rate has been 12 375 per thousand per annum for the last fifteen months, during which a Municipal register has been maintained.

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and the completion of that from Malura to Dindigul. An alternative line of communication between the Railway and the two southern provinces of Madura and Tinnevely has thus been secured in addition to the old one by the road from Trichinopoly to Madura, and the opinion of the Commissioners, which is based on experience, is that tolls in no way diminish traffic if accompanied by an improvement in proportion to their amount of the roads on which they are levied. Between Madura and Caroor the traveller has to pay a two-Anna toll at Dindigul; but this is an utterly insignificant impost as compared with the loss of time and money which formerly resulted from the bad state of the road. It is, of course, the case that as district roads are made and maintained from local funds, while the tolls are levied for the benefit of Municipal funds and their proceeds spent within the town—an injustice which might be easily prevented by the adoption of the plan already proposed by the Commissioners—and that, therefore, the improvement of the roads is not in any way a result of the levy of tolls. This is, however, not known to the payers of tolls, and as the improvement of the roads happens to have been synchronous with the levy of tolls the effect is the same as if the one had resulted from the other.

(Signed) H. W. BLISS,
Vice-President.

No. 130. ORDER THEREON, 20th September 1872, No. 1253.

From the above report on the Dindigul Municipality for 1871-72 it appears that the receipts for the year inclusive of balance in hand and arrear State contribution amounted to Rupees 11,443 and the expenditure to Rupees 11,443, leaving a balance of Rupees 5,051 as marginally noted.

2. The Auditor's report shows that the accounts have been satisfactorily kept, and with the exception of two slight clerical errors the statements submitted with the report appear to have been correctly prepared.

3. The receipts exceeded the estimate by Rupees 375 and the expenditure fell short by Rupees 1,754; but Rupees 503, due for the construction of the market, were paid after the close of the year. The further decrease is chiefly owing to only Rupees 300 having been expended on a slaughter-house instead of Rupees 750, and to no disbursements having been made under the head of

"Education" as no bills for grants were received in time.

4. The principal work of the year has been the construction of a new market with a good water-supply. From this and the slaughter-house, which has been nearly completed, the Commissioners anticipate a net profit of over ten per cent. on the expenditure.

RECEIPTS—		
Current—		
Rate on houses	...	637
Tax on vehicles	...	428
Registration of carts	...	303
Tolls	...	4,545
Fees	...	130
From	...	17
		6,250
Arrears—		
State contribution	...	1,052
Rate on houses	...	2-6
Other arrears	...	53
		2,336
Miscellaneous	...	19
Advances recovered—		
Police refund	...	440
Legal expenses	...	255
Balance brought forward	...	2,443
		11,443
EXPENDITURE—		
Public Works—		
New works	...	3,248
Repairs	...	515
Other items	...	65
Dispensary	...	153
Vaccination	...	100
Registration of births and deaths	...	100
Conservancy	...	1,643
Miscellaneous	...	50
Supervision and management	...	540
		6,413
Balance	...	5,051
		11,443

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5. The expenditure on dispensaries was in the form of a contribution to the Rev. Mr. Chester's institution, at which 103 in-patients and 5956 out-patients were treated in the course of the year.

6. The Municipality seems, on the whole, to have worked satisfactorily throughout the year.

7. With reference to G. O. dated 4th May 1872, No. 627, the Commissioners report that although the people do not murmur against the Municipality yet they merely accept it like anything else which is inevitable, and would much rather that it did not exist. They add, however, that they believe the more intelligent part of the community fully appreciate the benefits which have been conferred on them by the Act. Much more could hardly be expected for the present.

8. Although the receipts from tolls supplied means for about two-fifths of the total expenditure, the Commissioners find that the impost has not prevented a steady annual increase in the traffic.

(True Extract.)


Acting Under Secy. to Govt.

To the Acting President of the Municipal Commission, Dindigul.

- .. Board of Revenue.
- .. Revenue Department. ✓
- .. Public Works Department.
- .. Inspector-General of Police.
- .. Indian Medical Department.
- .. Sanitary Commissioner.
- .. Director of Public Instruction.
- .. Accountant-General.
- .. President of the Local Fund Boards, Madura.

Exd. A. S. Rodgers.



Revenue 1872 v.
No 13208
Voblt. of 1872 31st

FI. ANCIAL.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE
MUNICIPAL COMMISSION,
Dudg. H.
do,
do.

Dated September, 20th.
Recd. *Adm. Sec.* Encl.

G. O., 20th Sept for 1872, No. 1273.

SEPTEMBER.
Nos. 129-130.

Reviewing the report on the working of the
Municipal Municipality for 1871-72.

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