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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

REVENUE DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	1350	Press
B.P. No.		Mis.
Dated	6-4-1877	197

Not to be folded or roughly handled

1350

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
6th April 1877.*

Famine Relief.

Read the following papers:—

No. 150. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 5th February 1877,
No. 482.

Read the following letter from J. H. MASTER, Esq., Collector of Bellary, to
H. E. STOKES, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 1st
February 1877, No. 71:—

In December Mr. Ross reported a great influx of persons from the Mysore territory
to his relief works; I requested him to let me know the places to which they congregated.

2. This he has only now done; but in reporting I am glad to be able to say that
he has dismissed these men and told them to find work in their own territory.

3. As the Chief Commissioner of Mysore, in his telegram quoted in G.O.,
Revenue Department, No. 32, dated the 4th instant, embodied in Board's Proceedings,
Miscellaneous No. 171, stated that works were in progress in Mysore, this course
was fully justified; and I had myself in a letter, No. 152, dated the 20th instant,
requested Mr. Ross to follow it. The fact that the men could strike work when a
small fine was inflicted shows that their distress could not have been severe.

4. I beg to enclose copy of Mr. Ross' letter, and to request that intimation of
what has been done may be given to the Chief Commissioner of Mysore.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From H. T. ROSS, Esq., Acting Head Assistant Collector, to J. H. MASTER, Esq., Collector
of Bellary, dated Pennakonda, 10th December 1876, No. 332.

EVER since I opened relief works in my three taluqs they have been resorted to by Mysore
subjects in distress. For some time the number of these was inconsiderable, and I directed my
Tahsildars personally not to exclude any persons who came for relief to our works, no matter
what their villages were. Now, however, the number of Mysore coolies on our works is consider-
able and believed to be on the increase, and it becomes a matter for serious consideration whether
large sums of our Government money should be expended in supporting Mysore subjects who
have their own Government to look after them; I have not liked to turn them off my works,
because they have represented to me earnestly that they have no means of living as no work has
been provided for them in their own taluqs, and there could be no mistake about their distress
and their gratitude for the relief given them. I have the honor to request early instructions
whether I am to continue admitting an unlimited number of Mysore subjects to my relief works
or not.

From the same Officer, dated Hindupur, 11th January 1877, No. 16.

With reference to your dockets, Nos. 2,060 and 2, dated 26th ultimo and 3rd instant,
respectively, I have the honor to forward
Hindupur Tahsildar's explanation* regarding

the gratuitous relief that is being afforded to a large number of children in his taluq. He states
he feeds none except those who have no parents, or whose parents are either unable to work or are
too poor to spare any portion of their wages for their support. The daily wages which a cooly
gets is barely sufficient for his support for that day, and it is hardly fair to expect that he should
manage to provide for his youngsters out of his scanty earnings.

Moreover, the influx of a large number of Mysore subjects migrating into our territory in families has swelled, and threatens to swell still more the numbers both on our relief-works and in our relief-houses. From the Tahsildar's return for the week ending 6th instant it will be seen that the number has increased to 10,867.

The Tahsildar gets from each Reddi in charge of a relief house a daily return of number of persons, and on these returns he frames his reports.

I am commencing a personal inspection of relief houses, and will report again if necessary.

From J. H. MASTER, Esq., Collector of Bellary, to H. T. ROSS, Esq., Assistant Collector in charge of Head Assistant Collector's Office, Pennakondah, dated 20th January 1877, No. 152.

With reference to your letter, No. 16, dated the 11th instant, and to this office docket, No. 138, dated the 17th instant, I have the honor, pending further instructions in the matter, to observe that you should send back all Mysore subjects to their own homes if necessary, using the Police for the purpose; you should, however, communicate with the Deputy Commissioner of the District informing him of your procedure.

From H. T. ROSS, Esq., Assistant Collector in charge of the Head Assistant Collector's Office, to J. H. MASTER, Esq., Collector of Bellary, dated Pennakondah, 23rd January 1877, No. 34.

With reference to your letter, No. 1,978, dated 16th December last, I have the honor to enclose a statement exhibiting the number and distribution of Mysore coolies who have been resorting to my relief-works. This shows a total of 17,618 in my three taluqs, but from what I have personally seen of them, I am inclined to think their number is understated.

2. I regret the delay which has occurred in answering your letter. The return from Madaksera was only received this day.

3. I beg to report that I have been forced to take action in getting rid of these Mysore coolies without waiting for orders. I found, on inspection of the manner in which my organization is being kept up, that whenever there were Mysore coolies everything was being constantly thrown out of order. Our own people work regularly week after week, and being permanently on the works, the gangs into which they are formed remain the same; every cooly knows his place and his work, and the establishment for supervision being once settled requires no change. With the Mysore coolies it is different. They come one day and not the next; sometimes they desert the work for days together. This breaks up our fixed gangs; throws out Supervisors whose gangs have been upset; makes the preparation of the labor returns difficult; and, in short, upsets the whole system. I have seen also from personal experience that these Mysore coolies care nothing for our Supervisors; that they demoralise our own people terribly; calling on to the works at 9 or 10 o'clock, doing nothing and making our own people suffer when the gangs are fined, so as to bring the cost of their work done to its value according to my task-work rates.

4. I do not think it necessary to cite in detail any more reasons to justify me in getting rid of Mysore coolies as I am now doing. Considerable numbers of them struck work, and left of their own accord, the first time they were fined for short work. I see also from the Chief Commissioner's telegram, quoted in G.O., No. 32, dated 4th January 1877, that works have not been stopped in Mysore as the coolies allege, and therefore, as they have works in Mysore to go to, there is no reason why I should admit them to mine.

5. There are considerable numbers of Mysore paupers now being fed at my relief-houses. These I have not liked to turn away in common humanity; and I am getting a return of the numbers fed at each of my relief-houses, which I will submit shortly for your information and orders. I think I informed you demi-officially that I had, on the 10th instant, counted 1,321 of them at the Hindupur Relief-house alone. I regret to report that three cases of death from

starvation, two in Hindupur and one in Madaksera, have, within the last few days, come under my notice. These three persons were Mysore paupers who had dragged themselves to these relief-houses in the last stage, and though they were cared for immediately, I am satisfied they were beyond saving.

S.—Since drafting the above, I have received your letter, No. 152, dated 20th January 1877, mentioning the dismissal of all Mysore coolies. I now only require orders regarding the dismissal of Mysore paupers from our relief-houses. As the question is one of principle, I have the honor to request early orders without waiting for the time it will take to obtain returns of the numbers fed at each relief-house.

(True Copies.)

(Signed) J. H. MASTER,
Collector.

From Lieutenant-Colonel R. B. KENNEDY, District Engineer, Malabar, to H. E. STOKES, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Calicut, 30th January 1877, No. 372.

[REFERENCE.—Proceedings of Revenue Board, No. 960, dated 25th January 1877.]

In the absence of the Collector, the matter being one that will not admit delay, I have the honor to inform you, with reference to above Proceedings, that the effect of the action taken by the Revenue Board in directing the Accountant-General to withdraw the sum of Rupees 56,336 will be not only to suddenly throw out of employment a large number of work-people, but will leave the Divisional Officers without funds to meet arrears of wages due for work already performed, as well as large sums due to contractors.

2. I am not aware what reports have reached the Board regarding the Wynaad portion of this district; and though it is not, under ordinary circumstances, my province to meddle in such matters, yet, in an exceptional season like this, I imagine no public officer would be held excusable if he failed to bring to notice facts that, if left unreported, would lead those whose duty it is to provide against such contingencies to believe that distress does not exist, or that it is not likely to become serious. At any rate, if hereafter it is found that a frightful mortality takes place owing to destitute laborers flocking into the district, and there being no means of relieving their wants, I shall have done all in my power to represent the case and give warning of not what is possible, but what is certain. The Collector appears not to have succeeded in placing the matter before the Revenue Board in a manner such as would make those who are unacquainted with the circumstances of the Wynaad Taluq at once understand its true bearing; and though I may equally fail, there are points I may, perhaps, say a word on, which have been as yet omitted. I presume it is known that there is a season in the year when work on coffee plantations is almost entirely suspended, extending from the close of picking crop to about the end of May; picking is generally brought to an end about the middle or close of February; this year, however, owing to short crops, it was finished throughout almost all Wynaad by the end of December, the result of which has already been explained by Mr. Logan in his letter to the Board. As a rule, the planters are not men of large means; and of late years, owing to bad seasons, they have been by no means doing well, so that to expect them to maintain large gangs of coolies when there is no necessary work is

asking what is absolutely beyond their ability. At this moment I can vouch, from personal knowledge, that coolies who in other seasons would immediately after crop-picking have gone back to Mysore and the other localities from whence they come, are hanging on at the estates and asking to be kept on without wages but for the mere food necessary to keep body and soul together. They all know that scarcity exists in Mysore, and that the price of food in Wynaad is slightly lower than there, and it is not therefore difficult to account for their clinging to the former. A fortnight ago I was in Wynaad and again observed what I saw on a previous tour, that men, women, and children are still flocking in bringing cattle and all they have with them; by no means arguing the likelihood of those already in Wynaad or on estates being about to return to their villages; and how this influx of labor is to be employed, and given means of livelihood when work is at a stand-still on the estates, if, in addition, the ordinary public works are also entirely suspended, is difficult to see. It is said that in some parts of the Presidency, where relief-works are going on, the appearance of the people is not always such as to give the idea of want, but the same could not be said of the troops of men, women, and children seen by me lately, nor are deaths even already wanting; for as I was driving along the main road from Sultan's Battery to Vythery a dead body of a man was lying at the road-side; what he died of, it would have been impossible to say, for although he certainly had not been dead more than a day or two, not being there when I before passed along the same spot, the whole of the body, with the exception of head and bones of the trunk, had been devoured by dogs and jackals. I have no doubt that as the season advances such sites will become more and more common. The climate of Wynaad is fatal enough at all times, but when want and starvation are added to make the attacks of fever still less resistible, the result is one which cannot be contemplated with indifference. One point especially appears to me to have escaped the Collector's attention when writing to the Revenue Board, viz., that even if the coolies do go to Mysore for a time they are certain to return to Wynaad somewhat earlier than usual, and that will bring them in just at the most unhealthy season. I am not disputing that the Mysore authorities will (as the Revenue Board remark) do their duty, but the rates of labor, it is well known, are lower in Mysore than in Wynaad, and from its greater proximity to the coast, and the freedom of Malabar from actual famine, prices of rice are somewhat lower in the latter; coolies are certain, notwithstanding that work may be found for them in Mysore, to flock in large numbers to Wynaad in the hope of better pay and cheaper grain; with such people it is useless to tell them that they are coming to where there is no work; the more they are told this, the more will they be disposed to believe that they are being deceived, and that it is only a manoeuvre on the part of their Government to keep them for some purpose of its own; the absurd reasons that have given rise to panics on various occasions pretty well establishes this probability. These people will arrive in Wynaad at the most unhealthy season, totally destitute, depending on the wages they expect for work which they will look to be awaiting them, and if the work is not there, how are they to get back? Without proper nutriment they will be in the condition for fever to do its worst, and it, as well as other diseases, the inevitable results of want, will carry them off by hundreds. I am not writing either about men, or things, of which I have had small means of becoming acquainted; I have been seventeen years in Wynaad and know the

district and the Mysore cooly as well as most men; I have known prices higher than at present, not from widespread scarcity, but from want of roads to bring food; and within half a mile of my own bungalow I have, in a single morning's walk, seen six dead bodies at the road-side; while such sights were certain to be seen in former days, so where one might. We now have the roads, and the consequence is that, though high, prices are not extraordinarily so for Wynaad (I believe rice can be bought at from 5 to 5½ seers for the rupee), and it scarcely seems consistent (if I may venture on the expression) at such a season to stop work that has been the means of bringing about this better state of things, or to make retrenchments which will result in the dilapidation and destruction of what has already been done, even if it is still determined to run the risk (or, as I have no hesitation in saying, the certainty) of a horrible mortality, by refusing to take in time means of relief which will be too late bye and bye. When that does take place, I shall certainly ask that the warning I have endeavored to give may be remembered and made known, for I have been too long connected with the district not to be sure to be loaded with heavy responsibility, if it were supposed that I allowed the experience I have gained to be of no use.

3. As regards the retrenchment that has been made, as soon as I am in a position to supply the figures I shall have, of necessity, to request a revision, as every allotment in the revised list, not in accordance with the one submitted by the President of the Local Fund Board, has already been exceeded, and money must be forthcoming to pay the wages in arrears. I will, at the same time, give detailed explanation why, in each case, it was impossible to stop expenditure at the stage that the several works were in at the end of November. I may mention that in one instance (not the Nooraddy Bridge) nearly Rupees 6,000 is due to a contractor, Mr. Maylor; and in several others to stop work would have been tantamount to shutting up the road; but for continued conservancy, the road from the coast up the Tambercherry Ghaut to Vythery and Culpatty, the two principal markets in South Wynaad, would have been blocked; and scarcity, which the large imports of grain from Calicut have prevented, would have been the result.

The foregoing papers refer to the question of providing relief for inhabitants of Mysore who may seek subsistence in British territory, and will be submitted for the early orders of Government.

2. From the correspondence forwarded by the Collector of Bellary it appears that strict orders have been issued to dismiss Mysore subjects from working gangs and from relief-houses, and orders to the same effect have been given, the Board understand, in the sub-division of Cuddapah. In the letter from the District Engineer, Malabar, referring to the stoppage of local public works in the Wynaad, and to the opinion of the Board that relief-works should not be opened in the taluq, Colonel Kennedy states that there is already an influx of Mysore people going on, which will increase later in the season, owing to the ordinary wages of labor being higher and prices lower than in Mysore; that the coolies on the estates are unwilling to return to their homes where, as they know, scarcity prevails; and that unless means of livelihood are provided for these people in the Wynaad, lamentable loss of life is likely to occur.

3. The importance of the question as affecting the already overtaxed resources of this Presidency is very great. The difficulty obviously arises from insufficient provision having been made in Mysore for affording work to its distressed inhabitants. If the Mysore coolies are to be allowed to remain in British territory, they cannot be left to starve, but the Board are decidedly of opinion that all who cannot obtain ordinary employment in British territory should be deported to their homes in communication with the Mysore authorities, whose business it is to provide for them there. Those who are so deported must of course be relieved for the time, and for this purpose camps might be formed in the Wynnad and elsewhere on the Mysore border. But if works are opened, and if they are allowed to remain even at subsistence wages, an incentive will merely be offered to fresh swarms to come in.

4. With regard to the retrenchment of the Local Fund grants of which Colonel Kennedy complains, the Board, while awaiting the further report promised as to charges incurred, observe that the reduced grants for the current year were settled with reference to a statement furnished through the President by the District Engineer himself, which purported to show the expenditure to date and the future requirements of the year. There is no possibility of increasing the grants made.

(True Copies and Extract.)

(Signed)

H. E. STOKES,
Acting Secretary.

No. 151. *Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Financial Department,
dated 10th February 1877, No. 508.*

ABSTRACT.—Chief Commissioner of Mysore requested to depute a special officer to arrange with the Collectors of Bellary, Cuddapah, and Malabar for the return of certain destitute poor to the Mysore territory country, and to take steps to reimburse this Government for the expenditure incurred on their account.

No. 151A. *ORDER THEREON, 6th April 1877, No. 1,350.*

Miscellaneous.

RECORDED with reference to Financial
Proceedings, No. 508, of 10th February
1877, and G.O., Revenue Department,
No. 1,169, dated 20th March 1877.

(True Extract.)

(Signed)

J. H. GARSTIN,
Additional Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
„ the Financial Department.

Exd. A. F. Goodall.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 5th February 1877.

Read the following letter from J. H. MASTER, Esq., Collector of Bellary, to H. E. STOKES, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 1st February 1877, No. 71:—

In December Mr. Ross reported a great influx of persons from the Mysore territory to his relief works, I requested him to let me know the places to which they congregated.

2. This he has only now done; but in reporting I am glad to be able to say that he has dismissed these men and told them to find work in their own territory.

3. As the Chief Commissioner of Mysore, in his telegram quoted in G.O., Revenue Department, No. 32, dated the 4th instant, embodied in Board's Proceedings, Miscellaneous No. 171, stated that works were in progress in Mysore, this course was fully justified; and I had myself in a letter, No. 152, dated the 20th instant, requested Mr. Ross to follow it. The fact that the men could strike work when a small fine was inflicted, shows that their distress could not have been severe.

4. I beg to enclose copy of Mr. Ross' letter, and to request that intimation of what has been done may be given to the Chief Commissioner of Mysore.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From H. T. ROSS, Esq., Acting Head Assistant Collector, to J. H. MASTER, Esq., Collector of Bellary, dated Pennakonda, 10th December 1876, No. 332.

EVER since I opened relief works in my three taluqs they have been resorted to by Mysore subjects in distress. For some time the number of these was inconsiderable, and I directed my Tahsildars personally not to exclude any persons who came for relief to our works, no matter what their villages were. Now, however, the number of Mysore coolies on our works is considerable and believed to be on the increase, and it becomes a matter for serious consideration whether large sums of our Government money should be expended in supporting Mysore subjects who have their own Government to look after them; I have not liked to turn them off my works because they have represented to me earnestly that they have no means of living as no work has been provided for them in their own taluqs, and there could be no mistake about their distress and their gratitude for the relief given them. I have the honor to request early instructions whether I am to continue admitting an unlimited number of Mysore subjects to my relief works or not.

From the same Officer, dated Hindupur, 11th January 1877, No. 16.

With reference to your docket Nos. 2,000 and 2, dated 26th ultimo and 3rd instant, respectively, I have the honor to forward

* Arzi, No. 12 of 1877, to be returned. Hindupur Tahsildar's explanation* regarding the gratuitous relief that is being afforded to a large number of children in his taluq. He states he feeds none except those who have no parents or whose parents are either unable to work or are too poor to spare any portion of their wages for their support. The daily wages which a cooly gets is barely sufficient for his support for that day, and it is hardly fair to expect that he should manage to provide for his youngsters out of his scanty earnings.

Moreover, the influx of a large number of Mysore subjects migrating into our territory in families has swelled, and threatens to swell still more the numbers both on our relief works and in our relief houses. From the Tahsildar's return for the week ending 6th instant, it will be seen that the number has increased to 10,867.

The Tahsildar gets from each Reddi in charge of a relief house a daily return of number of persons, and on these returns he frames his reports.

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Cool. of (1877) 332000.

REVENUE.

THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

Secy Secy Secy

Dated 4th Feb. 1877.

Recd.

Dated

G.O., 6th April 1877, No. 1,320.

APRIL.

No. 150-151A.

FARMER BELLARY, No. 802.

Substantive of Mysore subjects in British Territory—According to Board's Proceedings submitting letters from the Collector of Bellary and Justice Magistrate of Mysore on question of providing relief for —

I am commencing a personal inspection of relief houses and will report again, if necessary.

From J. H. MASTER, Esq., Collector of Bellary, to H. T. ROSS, Esq., Assistant Collector in charge of Head Assistant Collector's Office, Pennakondah, dated 20th January 1877, No. 152.

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4. I do not think it necessary to cite in detail any more reasons to justify me in getting rid of Mysore coolies as I am now doing. Considerable numbers of them struck work, and left of their own accord, the first time they were fined for short work. I see also from the Chief Commissioner's telegram, quoted in G.O. No. 32, dated 4th January 1877, that works have not been stopped in Mysore as the coolies allege, and therefore, as they have works in Mysore to go to, there is no reason why I should admit them to mine.

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P. S. Since drafting the above, I have received your letter, No. 152, dated 20th January 1877, sanctioning the dismissal of all Mysore coolies. I now only require orders regarding the dismissal

of Mysore paupers from our relief houses. As the question is one of principle, I have the honor to request early orders without waiting for the time it will take to obtain returns of the numbers fed at each relief house.

(True Copies.)

(Signed) J. H. MASTER.

Collector.

From Lieutenant-Colonel R. B. KENNEDY, District Engineer, Malabar, to Mr. E. STOKES, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Calicut, 30th January 1877, No. 372:—

[REFERENCE Proceedings of Revenue Board, No. 969, dated 25th January 1877.]

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2. I am not aware what reports have reached the Board regarding the Wynaad portion of this district; and though it is not, under ordinary circumstances, my province to meddle in such matters, yet, in an exceptional season like this, I imagine no public officer would be held excusable, if he failed to bring to notice facts that, if left unreported, would lead those whose duty it is to provide against such contingencies to believe that distress does not exist, or that it is not likely to become serious. At any rate if hereafter it is found that a frightful mortality takes place owing to destitute laborers flocking into the district and there being no means of relieving their wants, I shall have done all in my power to represent the case and give warning of, not what is possible, but what is certain. The Collector appears not to have succeeded in placing the matter before the Revenue Board in a manner such as would make those who are unacquainted with the circumstances of the Wynaad taluq at once understand its true bearing; and though I may equally fail, there are points I may perhaps say a word on, which have been as yet omitted. I presume it is known that there is a season in the year when work on coffee plantations is almost entirely suspended, extending from the close of picking crop to about the end of May; picking is generally brought to an end about the middle, or close of February; this year, however, owing to short crops, it was finished throughout almost all Wynaad by the end of December, the result of which has already been explained by Mr. Logan in his letter to the Board. As a rule the planters are not men of large means; and of late years, owing to bad seasons, they have been by no means doing well, so that to expect them to maintain large gangs of coolies when there is no necessary work is asking what is absolutely beyond their ability. At this moment, I can vouch from personal knowledge that coolies who, in other seasons, would immediately after crop picking have gone back to Mysore and the other localities from whence they come, are hanging on at the estates and asking to be kept on without wages but for the mere food necessary to keep body and soul together. They all know that scarcity exists in Mysore, and that the price of food in Wynaad is slightly lower than there, and it is not therefore difficult to account for their clinging to the former. A

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fortnight ago I was in Wynaad and again observed what I saw on a previous tour, that men, women, and children, are still flocking in bringing cattle and all they have with them; by no means arguing the likelihood of those already in Wynaad or on estates being about to return to their villages; and how this influx of labor is to be employed, and given means of livelihood when work is at a stand-still on the estates, if, in addition, the ordinary public works are also entirely suspended, is difficult to see. It is said that in some parts of the Presidency, where relief works are going on, the appearance of the people is not always such as to give the idea of want, but the same could not be said of the troops of men, women, and children seen by me lately, nor are deaths even already wanting; for as I was driving along the main road from Sultan's Battery to Vythery, a dead body of a man was lying at the road side; what he died of, it would have been impossible to say, for although he certainly had not been dead more than a day or two, not being there when I before passed along the same spot, the whole of the body, with the exception of head and bones of the trunk, had been devoured by dogs and jackals. I have no doubt that as the season advances, such sites will become more and more common. The climate of Wynaad is fatal enough at all times, but when want and starvation are added to make the attacks of fever still less resistable, the result is one which cannot be contemplated with indifference. One point especially appears to me to have escaped the Collector's attention when writing to the Revenue Board, viz., that even if the coolies do go to Mysore for a time they are certain to return to Wynaad somewhat earlier than usual, and that will bring them in just at the most unhealthy season. I am not disputing that the Mysore authorities will (as the Revenue Board remark) do their duty, but the rates of labor, it is well known, are lower in Mysore than in Wynaad, and from its greater proximity to the coast, and the freedom of Malabar from actual famine, prices of rice are somewhat lower in the latter; coolies are certain, notwithstanding that work may be found for them in Mysore, to flock in large numbers to Wynaad in the hope of better pay and cheaper grain; with such people it is useless to tell them that they are coming to where there is no work; the more they are told this, the more will they be disposed to believe that they are being deceived, and that it is only a manoeuvre on the part of their Government to keep them for some purpose of its own; the absurd reasons that have given rise to panics on various occasions pretty well establishes this probability. These people will arrive in Wynaad at the most unhealthy season totally destitute, depending on the wages they expect for work which they will look to be awaiting them, and if the work is not there, how are they to get back? Without proper nutriment, they will be in the condition for fever to do its worst, and it, as well as other diseases the inevitable results of want, will carry them off by hundreds. I am not writing either about men, or things, of which I have had small means of becoming acquainted; I have been seventeen years in Wynaad and know the district and the Mysore cooly as well as most men; I have known prices higher than at present, not from widespread scarcity, but from want of roads to bring food; and within half a mile of my own bungalow I have, in a single morning's walk, seen six dead bodies at the road-side; while such sights were certain to be seen in former days go where one might. We now have the roads and the consequence is that, though high, prices are not extraordinarily so for Wynaad; (I believe rice

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can be bought at from 5 to 5½ seers for the Rupee), and it scarcely seems consistent (if I may venture on the expression) at such a season to stop work that has been the means of bringing about this better state of things, or to make retrenchments which will result in the delapidation and destruction of what has already been done, even if it is still determined to run the risk (or as I have no hesitation in saying the certainty) of a horrible mortality, by refusing to take in time means of relief which will be too late bye and bye. When that does take place, I shall certainly ask that the warning I have endeavored to give, may be remembered and made known, for I have been too long connected with the district not to be sure to be loaded with heavy responsibility, if it were supposed that I allowed the experience I have gained to be of no use.

3. As regards the retrenchment that has been made, as soon as I am in a position to supply the figures, I shall have, of necessity, to request a revision, as every allotment in the revised list, not in accordance with the one submitted by the President of the Local Fund Board, has already been exceeded, and money must be forthcoming to pay the wages in arrears. I will, at the same time, give detailed explanation why, in each case, it was impossible to stop expenditure at the stage that the several works were in at the end of November. I may mention that in one instance (not the Nooraddy Bridge) nearly Rupees 6,000 is due to a Contractor, Mr. Maylor; and in several others to stop work would have been tantamount to shutting up the road; but for continued conservancy the road from the coast up the Tank Cherri Ghant to Vythery and Culpatty, the two principal markets in South Wynaad, would have been blocked; and scarcity, which the large imports of grain from Calicut have prevented, would have been the result.

The foregoing papers refer to the question of providing relief for inhabitants of Mysore who may seek subsistence in British territory, and will be submitted for the early orders of Government.

2. From the correspondence forwarded by the Collector of Bellary it appears that strict orders have been issued to dismiss Mysore subjects from working gangs and from relief houses, and orders to the same effect have been given, the Board understand, in the Sub-division of Cuddapah. In the letter from the District Engineer, Malabar, referring to the stoppage of local public works in the Wynaad and to the opinion of the Board that relief works should not be opened in the taluq, Colonel Kennedy states that there is already an influx of Mysore people going on, which will increase later in the season, owing to the ordinary wages of labor being higher and prices lower than in Mysore; that the coolies on the estates are unwilling to return to their homes where, as they know, scarcity prevails; and that unless means of livelihood are provided for these people in the Wynaad, lamentable loss of life is likely to occur.

3. The importance of the question as affecting the already overtaxed resources of this Presidency is very great. The difficulty obviously arises from insufficient provision having been made in Mysore for affording work to its distressed inhabitants. If the Mysore coolies are to be allowed to remain in British territory they cannot be left to starve, but the Board are decidedly of opinion that all who cannot obtain ordinary employment in British territory should be deported to their homes in communication with the Mysore authorities, whose business it is to provide for them there. Those who are so deported must of course be relieved for the time, and for this purpose camps might be formed in the Wynaad and elsewhere on the Mysore border. But if works

are opened and if they are allowed to remain even at subsistence wages, an incentive will merely be offered to fresh swarms to come in.

4. With regard to the retrenchment of the Local Fund grants of which Colonel Kennedy complains, the Board, while awaiting the further report promised as to charges incurred, observe that the reduced grants for the current year were settled with reference to a statement furnished through the President by the District Engineer himself, which purported to show the expenditure to date and the future requirements of the year. There is no possibility of increasing the grants made.

(True Copies and Extract.)

(Signed) H. E. STOKES,
Acting Secretary.

To the Additional Secretary to Government, Revenue Department,
with copies of two letters and of Board's Proceedings,
dated 24th January 1877, Miscellaneous No. 960.

Copy to the Collector of Bellary.

" " " of Malabar.

" " District Engineer, Malabar.

Exd. W. H. French.

Inhabitants of Mysore — seeking subsistence in British Territory. — Submitting to Government, with Board's views, letters from Collector of Bellary and District Engineer, Malabar, on question of providing relief for, and passing grants regarding retrenchment, of Local Fund & ante complained of by latter officer.

FEBRUARY.
No. 489.

PROCEEDINGS, 5TH FEBRUARY 1877, No. 482.

1877.
BOARD of REVENUE,
MADRAS.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

FINANCIAL DEPARTMENT.

10th February 1877, No. 508.

Famine Relief.

Read the following paper: —

No. 199. *Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 5th February 1877, No. 482.*

Read the following letter from J. H. MASTER, Esq., Collector of Bellary, to H. E. STOKES, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 1st February 1877, No. 71:—

In December Mr. Ross reported a great influx of persons from the Mysore territory to his relief works, I requested him to let me know the places to which they congregated.

2. This he has only now done; but in reporting I am glad to be able to say that he has dismissed these men and told them to find work in their own territory.

3. As the Chief Commissioner of Mysore, in his telegram quoted in G.O., Revenue Department, No. 32, dated the 4th instant, embodied in Board's Proceedings, Miscellaneous No. 171, stated that works were in progress in Mysore, that course was fully justified; and I had myself in a letter, No. 162, dated the 20th instant, requested Mr. Ross to follow it. The fact that the men could strike work when a small fine was inflicted, shows that their distress could not have been severe.

4. I beg to enclose copy of Mr. Ross' letter, and to request that intimation of what has been done may be given to the Chief Commissioner of Mysore.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From H. T. ROSS, Esq., Acting Head Assistant Collector, to J. H. MASTER, Esq., Collector of Bellary, dated Pennakonda, 10th December 1876, No. 332.

Ever since I opened relief works in my three taluqs they have been resorted to by Mysore subjects in distress. For some time the number of these was inconsiderable, and I directed my Tahsildars personally not to exclude any persons who came for relief to our works, no matter what their villages were. Now, however, the number of Mysore coolies on our works is considerable and believed to be on the increase, and it becomes a matter for serious consideration whether large sums of our Government money should be expended in supporting Mysore subjects who have their own Government to look after them; I have not liked to turn them off my works because they have represented to me earnestly that they have no means of living as no work has been provided for them in their own taluqs, and there could be no mistake about their distress and their gratitude for the relief given them. I have the honor to request early instructions whether I am to continue admitting an unlimited number of Mysore subjects to my relief works or not.

From the same Officer, dated Hindupur, 11th January 1877, No. 16.

With reference to your docket Nos. 2, 180 and 2, dated 26th ultimo and 3rd instant, respectively, I have the honor to forward Hindupur Tahsildar's explanation* regarding

* Arzi, No. 12 of 1877, to be returned.

the gratuitous relief that is being afforded to a large number of children in his taluq. He states he feeds none except those who have no parents or whose parents are either unable to work or are too poor to spare any portion of their wages for their support. The daily wages which a cooly gets is barely sufficient for his support for that day, and it is hardly fair to expect that he should manage to provide for his youngsters out of his scanty earnings.

Moreover, the influx of a large number of Mysore subjects migrating into our territory in families has swelled, and threatens to swell still more the numbers both on our relief works and in our relief houses. From the Tahsildar's return for the week ending 6th instant, it will be seen that the number has increased to 10,867.

The Tahsildar gets from each Reddi in charge of a relief house a daily return of number of persons, and on these returns he frames his reports.

I am commencing a personal inspection of relief houses and will report again, if necessary.

From J. H. MASTER, Esq., Collector of Bellary, to H. T. ROSS, Esq., Assistant Collector in charge of Head Assistant Collector's Office, Pennakondah, dated 20th January 1877, No. 152.

With reference to your letter, No. 16, dated the 11th instant, and to this office docket, No. 138, dated the 17th instant, I have the honor, pending further instructions in the matter, to observe that you should send back all Mysore subjects to their own homes if necessary, using the Police for the purpose; you should, however, communicate with the Deputy Commissioner of the District informing him of your procedure.

From H. T. ROSS, Esq., Assistant Collector in charge of the Head Assistant Collector's Office, to J. H. MASTER, Esq., Collector of Bellary, dated Pennakondah, 23rd January 1877, No. 34.

With reference to your letter, No. 1,978, dated 16th December last, I have the honor to enclose a statement exhibiting the number and distribution of Mysore coolies who have been resorting to my relief works. This shows a total of 17,618 in my three taluqs, but from what I have personally seen of them, I am inclined to think their number is understated.

2. I regret the delay which has occurred in answering your letter. The return from Madaksera was only received this day.

3. I beg to report that I have been forced to take action in getting rid of these Mysore coolies without waiting for orders. I found, on inspection, of the manner in which my organization is being kept up, that whenever there were Mysore coolies everything was being constantly thrown out of order. Our own people work regularly week after week, and being permanently on the works, the gangs into which they are formed remain the same; every cooly knows his place and his work, and the establishment for supervision being once settled requires no change. With the Mysore coolies it is different. They come one day and not the next, sometimes they desert the work for days together. This breaks up our fixed gangs; throws out Supervisors whose gangs have been upset; makes the preparation of the labor returns difficult; and in short upsets the whole system. I have seen also from personal experience that these Mysore coolies care nothing for our Supervisors; that they demoralise our own people terribly; calling on to the works at 9 or 10 o'clock, doing nothing, and making our own people suffer when the gangs are fined, so as to bring the cost of their work down to its value according to my task-work rates.

4. I do not think it necessary to cite in detail any more reasons to justify me in getting rid of Mysore coolies as I am now doing. Considerable numbers of them struck work, and left of their own accord, the first time they were fined for short work. I see also from the Chief Commissioner's telegram, quoted in G.O., No. 32, dated 4th January 1877, that works have not been stopped in Mysore as the coolies allege, and therefore, as they have works in Mysore to go to, there is no reason why I should admit them to mine.

5. There are considerable numbers of Mysore paupers now being fed at my relief houses. These I have not liked to turn away in common humanity; and I am getting a return of the numbers fed at each of my relief houses, which I will submit shortly for your information and

orders. I think I informed you semi-officially that I had, on the 10th instant, counted 1,321 of them at the Hindupur relief house. I regret to report that three cases of death from starvation, two in Hindupur and one in Madaksera, have, within the last few days, come under my notice. These three persons were Mysore paupers who had dragged themselves to these relief houses in the last stage, and though they were cared for immediately, I am satisfied they were beyond saving.

P.S.—Since drafting the above, I have received your letter, No. 152, dated 20th January 1877, sanctioning the dismissal of all Mysore coolies. I now only require orders regarding the dismissal of Mysore paupers from our relief houses. As the question is one of principle, I have the honor to request early orders without waiting for the time it will take to obtain returns of the numbers fed at each relief house.

(True Copies.)

(Signed) J. H. MASTER,
Collector.

From Lieutenant-Colonel R. B. KENNEDY, District Engineer, Malabar, to H. E. STOKES, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Calicut, 30th January 1877, No. 372.

[REFERENCE.—Proceedings of Revenue Board, No. 960, 25th January 1877.]

IN the absence of the Collector, the matter being one that will not admit delay, I have the honor to inform you, with reference to above Proceedings, that the effect of the action taken by the Revenue Board in directing the Accountant General to withdraw the sum of Rupees 56,336 will be not only to suddenly throw out of employment a large number of work-people, but will leave the Divisional Officers without funds to meet arrears of wages due for work already performed, as well as large sums due to Contractors.

2. I am not aware what reports have reached the Board regarding the Wynaad portion of this district; and though it is not, under ordinary circumstances, my province to meddle in such matters, yet, in an exceptional season like this, I imagine no public officer would be held excusable, if he failed to bring to notice facts that, if left unreported, would lead those whose duty it is to provide against such contingencies to believe that distress does not exist, or that it is not likely to become serious. At any rate if hereafter it is found that a frightful mortality takes place owing to destitute laborers flocking into the district and there being no means of relieving their wants, I shall have done all in my power to represent the case and give warning of, not what is possible, but what is certain. The Collector appears not to have succeeded in placing the matter before the Revenue Board in a manner such as would make those who are unacquainted with the circumstances of the Wynaad taluq at once understand its true bearing; and though I may equally fail, there are points I may perhaps say a word on, which have been as yet omitted. I presume it is known that there is a season in the year when work on coffee plantations is almost entirely suspended, extending from the close of picking crop to about the end of May; picking is generally brought to an end about the middle, or close of February; this year, however, owing to short crops, it was finished throughout almost all Wynaad by the end of December, the result of which has already been explained by Mr. Logan in his letter to the Board. As a rule the planters are not men of large means; and of late years, owing to bad seasons, they have been by no means doing well, so that we expect them to maintain large gangs of coolies when there is no necessary work in

asking what is absolutely beyond their ability. At this moment, I can vouch from personal knowledge that coolies who, in other seasons would immediately after crop picking have gone back to Mysore and the other localities from whence they come, are hanging on at the estates and asking to be kept on without wages but for the mere food necessary to keep body and soul together. They all know that scarcity exists in Mysore, and that the price of food in Wynaad is slightly lower than there, and it is not therefore difficult to account for their clinging to the former. A fortnight ago I was in Wynaad and again observed what I saw on a previous tour, that men, women, and children, are still flocking in bringing cattle and all they have with them; by no means arguing the likelihood of those already in Wynaad or on estates being about to return to their villages; and how this influx of labor is to be employed, and given means of livelihood when work is at a stand-still on the estates, if, in addition, the ordinary public works are also entirely suspended, is difficult to see. It is said that in some parts of the Presidency, where relief works are going on, the appearance of the people is not always such as to give the idea of want, but the same could not be said of the troops of men, women, and children seen by me lately, nor are deaths even already wanting; for as I was driving along the main road from Sultan's Battery to Vythery, a dead body of a man was lying at the road side; what he died of, it would have been impossible to say, for although he certainly had not been dead more than a day or two, not being there when I before passed along the same spot, the whole of the body, with the exception of head and bones of the trunk, had been devoured by dogs and jackals. I have no doubt that as the season advances, such sites will become more and more common. The climate of Wynaad is fatal enough at all times, but when want and starvation are added to make the attacks of fever still less resistible, the result is one which cannot be contemplated with indifference. One point especially appears to me to have escaped the Collector's attention when writing to the Revenue Board, viz., that even if the coolies do go to Mysore for a time they are certain to return to Wynaad somewhat earlier than usual, and that will bring them in just at the most unhealthy season. I am not disputing that the Mysore authorities will (as the Revenue Board remark) do their duty, but the rates of labor, it is well known, are lower in Mysore than in Wynaad, and from its greater proximity to the coast, and the freedom of Malabar from actual famine, prices of rice are somewhat lower in the latter; coolies are certain, notwithstanding that work may be found for them in Mysore, to flock in large numbers to Wynaad in the hope of better pay and cheaper grain; with such people it is useless to tell them that they are coming to where there is no work; the more they are told this, the more will they be disposed to believe that they are being deceived, and that it is only a manoeuvre on the part of their Government to keep them for some purpose of its own; the absurd reasons that have given rise to panics on various occasions pretty well establishes this probability. These people will arrive in Wynaad at the most unhealthy season totally destitute, depending on the wages they expect for work which they will look to be awaiting them, and if the work is not there, how are they to get back? Without proper nutriment, they will be in the condition for fever to do its worst, and it, as well as other diseases the inevitable results of want, will carry them off by hundreds. I am not writing either about men, or things, of which I have had small means of becoming acquainted; I have been seventeen years in Wynaad and know the

district and the Mysore cooly as well as most men; I have known prices higher than at present, not from widespread scarcity, but from want of roads to bring food; and within half a mile of my own bungalow I have, in a single morning's walk, seen six dead bodies at the road-side; while such sights were certain to be seen in former days go where one might. We now have the roads and the consequence is that, though high, prices are not extraordinarily so for Wynaad (I believe rice can be bought at from 5 to 5½ seers for the Rupee), and it scarcely seems consistent (if I may venture on the expression) at such a season to stop work that has been the means of bringing about this better state of things, or to make retrenchments which will result in the dilapidation and destruction of what has already been done, even if it is still determined to run the risk (or as I have no hesitation in saying the certainty) of a horrible mortality, by refusing to take in time means of relief which will be too late by and by. When that does take place, I shall certainly ask that the warning I have endeavoured to give, may be remembered and made known, for I have been too long connected with the district not to be sure to be loaded with heavy responsibility, if it were supposed that I allowed the experience I have gained to be of no use.

3. As regards the retrenchment that has been made, as soon as I am in a position to supply the figures, I shall have, of necessity, to request a revision, as every allotment in the revised list, not in accordance with the one submitted by the President of the Local Fund Board, has already been exceeded, and money must be forthcoming to pay the wages in arrears. I will, at the same time, give detailed explanation why, in each case, it was impossible to stop expenditure at the stage that the several works were in at the end of November. I may mention that in one instance (not the Nooraddy Bridge) nearly Rupees 6,000 is due to a Contractor, Mr. Maylor; and in several others to stop work would have been tantamount to shutting up the road; but for continued conservancy the road from the coast up the Tambercherry Ghaut to Vythery and Culpatty, the two principal markets in South Wynaad, would have been blocked; and scarcity, which the large imports of grain from Calicut have prevented, would have been the result.

THE foregoing papers refer to the question of providing relief for inhabitants of Mysore who may seek subsistence in British territory, and will be submitted for the early orders of Government.

2. From the correspondence forwarded by the Collector of Bellary it appears that strict orders have been issued to dismiss Mysore subjects from working gangs and from relief houses, and orders to the same effect have been given, the Board understand, in the Sub-division of Cuddapah. In the letter from the District Engineer, Malabar, referring to the stoppage of local public works in the Wynaad and to the opinion of the Board that relief works should not be opened in the taluq, Colonel Kennedy states that there is already an influx of Mysore people going on, which will increase later in the season, owing to the ordinary wages of labor being higher and prices lower than in Mysore; that the coolies on the estates are unwilling to return to their homes where, as they know, scarcity prevails; and that unless means of livelihood are provided for these people in the Wynaad, lamentable loss of life is likely to occur.

3. The importance of the question as affecting the already overtaxed resources of this Presidency is very great. The difficulty obviously arises from insufficient provision having been made in Mysore for affording work to its distressed inhabitants. If the Mysore coolies are to be allowed to remain in British territory they cannot be left to starve, but the Board are decidedly of opinion that all who cannot obtain ordinary employment in British territory should be deported to their homes in communication with the Mysore authorities, whose business it is to provide for them there. Those who are so deported must of course be relieved for the time, and for this purpose camps might be formed in the Wynaad and elsewhere on the Mysore border. But if works are opened and if they are allowed to remain even at subsistence wages, an incentive will merely be offered to fresh swarms to come in.

4. With regard to the retrenchment of the Local Fund grants of which Colonel Kennedy complains, the Board, while awaiting the further report promised as to charges incurred, observe that the reduced grants for the current year were settled with reference to a statement furnished through the President by the District Engineer himself, which purported to show the expenditure to date and the future requirements of the year. There is no possibility of increasing the grants made.

(True Copies and Extract.)

(Signed) H. E. STOKES,

Acting Secretary.

To the Additional Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

No. 200. To the Chief Commissioner of Mysore, dated Fort St. George, 10th February 1877, No. 508.

I am directed by His Grace the Governor in Council to bring to your notice the fact that large numbers of people are flocking from the Mysore territory to the Famine Relief Works and Feeding-houses in the Bellary and Cuddapah Districts, and to the Wynaad in Malabar, in the hope of securing the means of subsistence in this season of distress.

2. So far as Bellary and Cuddapah are concerned, efforts have, the Government believe, been made to eliminate these people from the relief works and feeding-houses but without success, and this Government are opposed to effort in this direction.

3. In Wynaad the Government have reason to fear that, so far from the hoped-for refuge from distress being reached, the demand for labor will be less than usual while the slack time is at hand on the estates, and the ordinary unhealthiness of this tract of country is likely to be aggravated by the circumstances of the year.

4. His Grace the Governor in Council cannot but recognise the serious risk involved in sending away to Mysore territory large numbers of distressed folk who have wandered thence in search of relief, and has accordingly telegraphed instructions to the Collectors that all these people shall be admitted on precisely the same terms as the inhabitants of the districts to which they may repair, and that the necessary extension of work and relief must be unhesitatingly provided, but at the same time he considers that the resulting charge should properly be borne by Mysore, and the Collectors have been accordingly instructed to maintain as correct a register of the number of Mysore people relieved as may be possible.

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5. I am directed to request that you will depute a special officer to arrange with the Collectors of Bellary, Cuddapah, and Mababar for the return of these people to their own country as soon as may be, and at the same time to request that you will take steps to reimburse this Government for the expenditure incurred on their account so long as they remain in this Presidency.

6. As the rates of wages on relief works in Mysore are understood to be the same as in this Presidency, the charge to Mysore will be much the same in either case.

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Chief Secretary.

(True Copy)

H. E. Stokes
Under Secretary.

To the Revenue Department.
" Board of Revenue.

Info in Rev. Dep. on 10th Feb. 1877
See ...
6/2/77 LHP
This ...

Ed. J. Wright.

W

Read Proceedings of the Board
of Revenue dated 5th February
1847 N-482. also. Cong. House Bill
D. 100

G. O. d'Arques 1877

Recorded with reference to Financial Proceedings No. 508 of 10th February 1877 and G. O. Res. Finance Department No 1169 dated 20th March 1877.

and apt. 35th of 22 April 77
59th Funeral dept

Q 86 2 June 77 Me 1358