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# TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

## GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

REVENUE DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. 1366
~~B.P. No.~~

Press
Mis.

Dated 7.4-1877 ~~197~~ .

*Not to be folded or roughly handled*

1366
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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,*
*7th April 1877.*

**Famine Relief.**

No. 183. Read the following letter from Surgeon-Major W. R. CORNISH, F.R.C.S., Sanitary Commissioner for Madras, to the Hon. D. F. CARMICHAEL, Officiating Chief Secretary to Government, Fort. St. George, dated Madras, 31st March 1877, No. 237:—

I HAVE the honor to submit, for the information of His Grace in Council, my notes on the condition of the relief coolies, &c., in the taluqs of Voilpaud and Royachoti in the Cuddapah District.

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## MEMORANDUM.

ON the evening of Sunday the 25th instant I left Maddanapully and reached Gurramkonda in the Voilpaud Taluq on the morning of the 26th. Mr. Gribble, the Sub-Collector, had previously arranged for the people on relief-works in this neighbourhood being assembled for my inspection, and had requested the Tahsildar and Deputy Collector to meet me. Mr. Traill, the Executive Engineer, was good enough to accompany me to Gurramkonda.

2. I found assembled at Gurramkonda 51 gangs of relief coolies, numbering in all 2,015 persons; of these people, 772 were picked out and noted as "aged" or "physically weak" and "reduced from bad living." More than 37 per cent. of the whole were in my opinion already feeling the effects of privation.

3. Amongst these gangs were seen some very fine specimens of humanity in persons of the *Mala* or *Madiga* castes. To look at their broad shoulders and marked muscular development a superficial observer would immediately conclude that a country producing such a finely-developed people could not in any sense be considered famine-stricken. But any one taking the trouble to inquire a little more closely into the causes of the robust appearance of certain persons or gangs, would have no great difficulty in arriving at a conclusion that the famine, instead of pinching them, had brought them a glut of nourishing food such as they could have got in no other time but one of general famine.

4. The Mala or Madiga castes in the Telugu country represent to a great extent the ordinary Pariah population in the south. They have no scruples about eating the flesh of cattle, or animals of any sort (even though the latter may have died of famine diseases). As is well known to Government, the mortality amongst cattle has been very high in these upland taluqs of the Cuddapah District. The Tahsildar of Voilpaud estimated that already three-fourths of the ordinary herds of his division had died of disease, or have been killed by the lower classes for food. Both the Deputy Collector and Tahsildar assured me that they had known instances of full-grown cattle sold for sums varying from 4 to 8 Annas each, the purchasers being either Mahomedans or the flesh-eating castes above noted, who for months past have been subsisting to a very considerable extent on the flesh of animals either dying of starvation, or rendered valueless to their owners by lack of food.

5. When Lord Napier visited the famine districts of Ganjam in 1866 nothing surprised him more (as his published minutes testify) than the fact that the Ooriyas of the north would die unrepiningly of starvation with herds of fat cattle ready at

country producing people

hand to yield them food. The laboring castes of the south are wiser in their generation, and have freely availed themselves of the glut of animal food (such as it is) in the market, during the presence of famine, to save themselves and their families from starvation. The only women of these Voilpaud gangs who looked really well nourished belonged to the flesh-eating castes.

6. So far as I can learn, the cattle mortality is still going on. But a few early showers of rain may give pasturage for the beasts, and instead of selling them for mere nominal sums, the value to the owners of the survivors of the famine will be enhanced much above the average rates. It is evident, therefore, that the present satisfactory condition of the flesh-eating castes is due to abnormal causes, and that when the supplies of animal food become scarce and dear, they will be no better off than their grain-feeding neighbours.

7. These remarks, of course, ha[illegible]eral reference to the beef-eating people throughout the country. In every [illegible]ection of laborers many of these classes will be found, and it is only right that the causes of their generally good physical condition should be hinted at, and that the fact of a few robust men and women here and there must not be taken as an indication that the people generally are getting the amount of nourishment that they have been accustomed to, and that a healthy existence demands.

8. In the Voilpaud Taluq there are about 11,000 people on relief-works, Camps for feeding the destitute are being established at Voilpaud and Peelair, and already about 500 persons are receiving relief in this form. The reduced rate of wages had been introduced only one week before my inspection at Gurramkonda, and the numbers were said to be decreasing under the influence of the lower scale. Payments are made only once a-week, and I heard of instances in which some gangs had gone without their pay for nearly three weeks, owing to delays in the checking of pay abstracts and in getting money from the treasury.

9. The current price of rice in this neighbourhood is about 13½ lbs. for the rupee. 1 Anna does not purchase a pound of grain, even when the cooly has the money in his hand to buy on the most favorable terms. If he has not the ready money, the circumstances are greatly against him, for he must take advances of grain on such terms as the bazaar dealers are pleased to arrange.

10. The Deputy Collector informs me that he hears frequently of instances in which the coolies spend their weekly wage for a three or four days' supply of food, starving or doing as they best can for the remainder of the week. Hardships of this kind are inevitable, perhaps, under a system of deferred payments, and I have already given my views on the importance of this confessedly "experimental" subsistence-wage being paid at short intervals. I have no doubt whatever that the system of paying in arrears leads to many abuses, other than the mere disadvantage of buying food on credit.

11. After leaving Maddanapully the country towards Gurramkonda (19 miles) is very dry. There is little or no cultivation in progress. The trees are bare of leaves, and there is every indication of scarcity of water and food. From Gurramkonda to Royachoti (24 miles) things are, if possible, still worse. The country is simply a desert, with hardly a green spot to relieve the monotonous color of the burnt-up soil.

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12. I arrived at Royachoti, the head-quarter station of the taluq of that name, on the morning of the 27th, and at once proceeded to see the shed in which the indigent poor are being accommodated. I arrived on the ground soon after daylight, and saw some very fearful pictures of starvation. About 150 were sleeping in the shed.

13. The officer in charge of the relief-works at Royachoti, Mr. Cotton, C.E., had unfortunately been struck down by an attack of confluent small-pox (contracted in the discharge of his duties), and had been sent into Cuddapah for treatment. The Tahsildar and his Deputy were both absent in other parts of the district. A Camp Superintendent, a young lad fresh from school, had gone in ill to Cuddapah on the 19th and had not returned, and thus it happened that there was nobody to give me any information or to show me what was being done, but Mr. Mathews, a Supervisor of the Department of [illegible]c Works, who resides at Royachoti, but who has no official connection with relief operations, and a Catechist of the London Mission, M. Tiruvengadam, who is temporarily employed under Mr. Cotton in feeding the people at the relief-house.

13. The applicants for gratuitous relief are increasing in this taluq in a ratio that is very significant of the state of things amongst the poorer classes. On the 5th instant there were 360 persons receiving one meal of cooked food daily, while on the 27th, the date of my visit, the numbers had gone up to 1,065.

14. Two temporary sheds had been put up some time ago near the town for the reception of the sick and infirm, but the relief-camp, although progressing, is not yet ready for occupation. This has been due to the sickness and absence of officials, and to the difficulty of getting materials for the huts. The camp is placed on the left bank of the river and about a mile from the town. About 30 "lean-to" huts were in course of construction, and I trust that no time will be lost in completing the arrangements for sheltering the destitute poor. At present the small town of Royachoti is inconveniently crowded by the villagers who have been sent in to be fed at the relief-camp.

15. The relief feeding takes place in an enclosed yard to the east of the town in a tope near the river. The space is very limited, and the numbers to be fed very considerable. A large number of the recipients of food were suffering from small-pox, a disease which is very prevalent just now in Royachoti. Most of the people receiving relief were evidently proper objects of charity, but there were a few whose destitution was not immediately apparent. The Taluq Vaccinator is working in the relief-house, and has already vaccinated a good number, but the bringing of these small-pox cases into a crowded yard to be fed, where they sit in close contact with others who had not had the disease, is very dangerous to public health. There is no medical officer of any description at Royachoti, and consequently nothing has been done to segregate the sick affected with contagious diseases.

16. Up to the time of my visit the feeding consisted of a single meal of 12 ounces of rice, except to the sick, who had a little extra food. I informed the Superintendent of the sanction of Government to the issue of two meals daily to the destitute received into relief-camps, and of the increase of grain allowance to 20 ounces per diem. In the *sheds* there were some very miserable objects of starva-

tion, and the more sickly ones are dying at the rate of 2 or 3 per diem. I saw some 50 or 60 persons here who cannot possibly survive many days or weeks. One young girl, about 10 years of age, a mere skeleton, on being lifted upright by her mother, fell down in a faint from sheer weakness.

17. After seeing the feeding at the relief-house I went to see the Subsidiary Jail, a very miserable place in the heart of the town, in the same building with the old Taluq Cutcherry. The inside yard was crowded with stores of Government rice, shutting out what little air might naturally reach the "lock-ups" allotted for prisoners. On my way back to the bungalow, just on the outskirts of the town, I came upon the dead body of an old Mussulman who had apparently got so far towards the relief kitchen, when he fell down and died, about two hours before I passed by. His cooking pots ([illegible]pty) lay by his side. Scenes like this, according to Mr. Supervisor Mathe[illegible] have not been infrequent of late at Royachoti. In January last, after an outbreak of cholera amongst coolies employed on a large tank, some 53 human bodies were left exposed in the bed of the river which runs by the town, and I learn from him, as well as other district officials, that a very considerable number of bodies have been found by them in positions indicating that they have died solitary and alone, away from help and friends.

18. I sent for the Village Munsif to ascertain the mortality registered in the town of Royachoti during the last few months. He brought me extracts from the register showing 66 deaths in December, 32 in January, 46 in February, and 42 in March up to the 26th instant. As the Catechist informs me that more than the number (42) entered for March have died in the feeding camp-sheds, I think it is quite clear that the registration does not give anything like the true rate of mortality. He shows no mortality at all from small-pox, while the great prevalence and virulence of this malady renders it certain that many deaths must have been due to it. A child of the Catechist's died of small-pox last week, and the Brahmin Police Inspector of this station told me that his wife and four persons of his household were laid up with the disease, and that hardly a house was free of it. Of the 144 deaths registered in the three months ending February, 134 are stated to have been from "cholera." Royachoti is only a small town of about 3,000 inhabitants, but being filled with indigent emigrants, the mortality is sure to be high. I did not find any arrangements in force for recording the deaths and causes of death in the sick-poor residing in the relief-sheds. I propose to address district authorities on the necessity of keeping accurate records of mortality in the various relief-camps, as is now being done in the larger camps near Madras.

19. From inquiries I have been making I am quite certain that our system of death registration in the provinces has to a great extent broken down, and that we shall never know the true mortality of this dreadful season of famine and pestilence from the records of the Village Accountants. When the dead are so numerous that they lie unburied, when people leave their villages by wholesale, and when village officials fly from their posts in panic, we can never get accurate accounts of the vital statistics. I mention the subject here, because I think it is right the Government should know that the facts coming to my knowledge indicate a very high mortality of certain classes of the population, and that this mortality is very

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largely connected with the defective food-supplies of the people, and that we must not expect to find the true mortality entered in the village registers.

20. Cholera is still prevailing in Royachoti. Two persons, members of separate families, came to me to beg for medicines for persons just attacked. The Catechist before alluded to has some knowledge of medicine, and has been doing a good deal in aiding the poor. I trust it will be practicable to place a good native medical-man in charge of Royachoti and the relief-camp, and that no time will be lost in completing the camp and placing the relief operations under the charge of a European official. These, I think, are the measures most practically needed.

21. *Relief Coolies.*—I saw only seven gangs of coolies who were at work either on roads, or in making the new [illegible]p, somewhat more than 300 in number. The proportion of sickly and weakly w[illegible]out the same as in the gangs of the Voilpaud Taluq. (My original figures were vitiated by taking a gang of carpenters employed in hutting as relief men, whereas the carpenters earn from 4 to 6 Annas a-day, and should not have been classed as relief coolies.)

22. The town of Royachoti is very badly off for water. Seeing it in its present state of dearth and drought, I am glad to think that Government have decided not to move the head-quarters of the district from Cuddapah to this place. The sand of the river bed is quite dry, and wells sunk in solid rock in the river bed yield but a scanty water-supply. Cuddapah, on the other hand, is bearing the strain on its water-supply very well, and a slight fresh in the Booga River has tended to restore the springs along the river valley.

23. I left Royachoti for Cuddapah on the evening of the 27th, arrived at Cuddapah on the 28th, and waited there to meet the Sanitary Commissioner with the Government of India, who has been deputed by the Government of India to visit and report on the relief laborers in this Presidency. I met Dr. Townsend on the 29th instant and conferred with him on the subjects of which he was desirous of being acquainted, and inspected with him some of the Cuddapah gangs of coolies working on the large tank.

24. Having experienced an attack of fever in the journey through the uplands of North Arcot and Cuddapah, I have returned for a few days to Madras for the despatch of arrears of work in the Easter Holidays preparatory to taking up the inspection of the Bellary District.

(Signed) W. R. CORNISH, F.R.C.S.,
*Sanitary Commissioner for Madras.*

*31st March* 1877.

No. 183. ORDER THEREON, 7th April 1877, No. 1,366.

Micellaneous.

COMMUNICATED to the Collector of Cuddapah, whose immediate attention is drawn to the statements made by Dr. Cornish relative to payments to laborers at Gurramkonda being made only once a-week, and to even greater delay having sometimes occurred. Measures should be at once taken to see that gangs are paid at least every second day if the daily payments ordered in G.O., No. 1,088, of the 17th ultimo, are not practicable.

2. Steps should be taken to place the Royachoti Relief-camp in charge of an efficient officer, an European if possible, and to provide for feeding paupers at the camp suffering from small-pox in a different place from other recipients of relief.

3. The neglect of his duty by the Village Munsif of Royachoti in respect of the registration of deaths which have occurred there should be promptly noticed.

4. The Government highly appreciate the services of the Catechist M Tiruvengadam.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. H. GARSTIN,
*Additional Secretary to Government.*

To the Sanitary Commissioner.
,, the Board of Revenue.
,, the Collector of Cuddapah.
,, the Financial Department.
,, the Public Works Department.
,, the Accountant-General.

Exd. A. F. Goodall.

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country producing such a finely developed people

15-5-56

Govt. of (1877) Orders.

REVENUE.

To

THE SANITARY COMMISSIONER,
&c., &c., &c.

Dated April, 7th.

Recd. Encl.

G.O., 7th April 1877, No. 1,380.

Nos. 153-164.

FAMINE RELIEF, No. 916.

*Dr. Cornish's Report on Royachoti and Voilpaud Taluqs in the Cuddapah District.*—Communicating, with remarks, to the Collector—, and calling his immediate attention to the statements made relative to payments to laborers at Gurramkonda being made once a-week, &c. Highly appreciating the services of the Catechist M. Teruvengadam.

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1866/5

# Memorandum

1. On the evening of Sunday the 25th Inst. I left Muddanapally and reached Goorumkondah in the Voilpaud Taluq on the morning of the 26th. Mr Gribble the Sub. Collector had previously arranged for the people on relief works in this neighbourhood being assembled for my inspection, and had requested the Tahsildar and Deputy Collector to meet me. Mr Traill the Executive Engineer was good enough to accompany me to Goorumkondah.

2. I found assembled at Goorumkondah 51 gangs of relief Coolies, numbering in all 2045 persons; of these people 772 were picked out and noted as "aged" or "physically weak" and "reduced" from bad living". More than 37 per. cent of the whole were in my opinion already feeling the effects of privation.

3. Amongst these gangs were seen some very fine specimens of humanity in persons of the Mala or Madiga Castes. To look at their broad shoulders and marked muscular development, a superficial observer would immediately conclude that a country producing such a finely developed people could not in any sense be considered amine stricken. But any one taking the ouble to enquire a little more closely nto the causes of the robust appearance f certain persons or gangs, would have no great difficulty in arriving at a conclusion that the famine instead of pinching hem, had brought them a glut of nourishing food such as they could have got in no other time but one of general famine.

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Both the Deputy Collector and Tahsildar assured me that they had known inst ances of full grown cattle sold for sums varying from 4 to 8 annas each, the purchasers being either Mahomedans or the flesh eating castes above noted, who for months past, have been subsisting to a very considerable extent on the flesh of animals either dying of starvation, or rendered valueless to their owners by lack of food

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7. These remarks of course have general reference to the beef eating people throughout the country. In every collection of labourers many

of these classes will be found and it is only right that the causes of their generally good physical condition should be hinted at, and that the fact of a few robust men and women here and there, must not be taken as an indication that the people generally are getting the amount of nourishment that they have been accustomed to, and that a healthy existence demands.

1366/7

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under the influence of lower scale. Payments are made only once a week, and I heard of instances in which some gangs had gone without their pay for nearly three weeks, owing to delays in the checking of pay abstracts, and in getting money from the treasury.

9. The current price of rice in this neighbourhood is about 13½ lb for the rupee. One anna does not purchase a lb of grain, even when the cooly has the money in his hand to buy on the most favorable terms. If he has not the ready money the circumstances are greatly against him for he must take advances of grain on such terms as the bazaar dealers are pleased to arrange.

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of the burnt up soil.

12. I arrived at Rayachoti, the head quarter station of the talug, of that name, on the morning of the 27th and at once proceeded to see the shed in which the indigent poor are being accommodated. I arrived on the ground soon after day-light and saw some very fearful pictures of starvation. About 150 were sleeping in the shed.

13. The officer in charge of the relief works at Rayachoti, Mr Cotton C.E., had unfortunately been struck down by an attack of Confluent Small-pox (contracted in the discharge of his duties) and had been sent into Cuddapah for treatment. The Tahsildar and his

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13. The applicants for gratuitous relief are increasing in this Talook in a ratio, that is very significant of the state of things amongst the poorer classes. On the 5th Instant there were 360 persons receiving one meal of cooked food daily, while on the 27th the date of my visit, the numbers had gone up to 1,065.

14. Two temporary sheds had been put up some time ago near the town for the reception of the sick and infirm, but the relief camp, although progressing, is not yet ready for occupation. This has been due to the sickness

and absence of officials and to the difficulty of getting materials for the huts. The camp is placed on the left bank of the river and about a mile from the town. About 30 "lean to" huts were in course of construction, and I trust that no time will be lost in completing the arrangements for sheltering & the destitute poor. At present the small town of Royachoti is inconveniently crowded by the villagers who have been sent in to be fed at the relief camp.

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18. I sent for the village Munsiff to ascertain the mortality registered in the town of Royachoti during the last few months. He brought me extracts from the register showing 66 deaths, in December, 32 in January, 46 in February and 42 in March, up to the 26" Instant. As the Catechist informs me that more than the number (42) entered for March have died

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**Relief Coolies**

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31st March 1877.

W. R. Cornish

Sanitary Commissioner
for Madras.

Recd. Lr. 7 2035
G.O. 7 April/77 No 1366

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No. 237

Office of Sanitary Commissioner,
Madras, 31st March 1877.

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From

The Sanitary Commissioner
for Madras,

To

The Chief Secretary to Government
Fort St George

Enclosures.

Sir,

I have the honor to submit for the information of His Grace in Council my notes on the condition of the relief coolies &ca. in the Talugs of Voilpaud and Royachoti in the Cuddapah District.

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

W. R. Cornish

Sanitary Commissioner
for Madras

From No 2035

The Sanitary Commissioner
for Madras,

To
The Chief Secretary
to Government
Fort St George

Dated 30th March 1877.
Despatched "
Received. 31 "

No. 1/237

ENCLOSURES. 1

Subject

Submits notes on the condition of relief coolies &c in the Talooks of Voilpaud and Rayachoti in the Cuddapah district.

G.O. 7 April/77 No 1366

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Returned. Please see further orders [illegible] attached to [illegible] the hospital [illegible]

1366/14

No. 237.

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit for the information of His Grace in Council, my notes on the condition of the relief coolies, &c., in the taluqs of Voilpaud and Rayachoti, in the Cuddapah district.

(Signed) W. R. C.

*Memorandum.*

1. On the evening of Sunday the 25th instant, I left Madanapalli, and reached Goorunkonda in the Voilpaud Taluq, on the morning of the 26th. Mr. Gribble, the Sub-Collector, had previously arranged for the people on relief works in this neighbourhood being assembled for my inspection, and had requested the Tahsildar and Deputy Collector to meet me. Mr. Traill, the Executive Engineer, was good enough to accompany me to Goorunkonda.

2. I found assembled at Goorunkonda, 51 gangs of relief coolies, numbering in all 2,045 persons; of these people, 772 were picked out and noted as "aged" or "physically weak" and "reduced" for bad "living." More than 37 per cent. of the whole were, in my opinion, already feeling the effects of privation.

3. Amongst these gangs were seen some very fine specimens of humanity in persons of the *Mala* or *Madiga* castes. To look at their broad shoulders and marked muscular development, a superficial observer would immediately conclude that a country producing such a finely developed people could not in any sense be considered famine-stricken. But any one taking the trouble to enquire a little more closely into the causes of the robust appearance of certain persons or gangs, would have no great difficulty in arriving at a conclusion that the famine, instead of pinching them, had brought them a glut of nourishing food, such as they could have got in no other time but one of general famine.

4. The Mala and Madiga castes in the Telugu country represent to a great extent the ordinary par[illegible] population in the South. They have no scruples about eating the flesh of cattle or animals of any sort (even though the latter may have died of famine diseases). As is well known to Government, the mortality amongst

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cattle has been very high in these upland taluqs of the Cuddapah District.

The Tahsildar of Voilpaud estimates that already $\frac{3}{4}$ths of the ordinary herds of his division had died of disease, or had been killed by the lower classes for food. Both the Deputy Collector and Tashildar assured me that they had known instances of full-grown cattle sold for sums varying from 4 to 8 annas each, the purchasers being either Mahommedans, or the flesh-eating castes above noted, who, for months past, have been subsisting to a very considerable extent on the flesh of animals, either dying of starvation, or rendered valueless to their owners by lack of food.

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5. When Lord Napier visited the famine districts of Ganjam in 1866, nothing surprised him more (as his published Minutes testify) than the fact that the Ooriahs of the north would die unrepiningly of starvation, with herds of fat cattle ready at hand to yield them food. The labouring castes of the South are wiser in their generation, and ~~have~~ freely availed themselves of the glut of animal food (such as it is) in the market during the presence of famine, to save themselves and their families from starvation. The only women of their gangs, who looked really well nourished, belonged to the flesh-eating castes.

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6. So far as I can learn, the cattle mortality is still going on. But a few early showers of rain may give pasturage for the beasts, and instead of selling them for mere nominal sums, the value to the owners of the survivors of the famine will be enhanced much above the average rates. It is evident, therefore, that the present satisfactory condition of the flesh-eating castes is due to abnormal causes, and that when the supplies of animal food become scarce and dear, they will be no better off than their grain-feeding neighbours.

7. These remarks, of course, have general reference to the beef-eating people throughout the country. In every collection of labourers many of these classes will be found, and it is only right that the causes of their general good

physical condition should be hinted at, and that the fact of a few robust men and women here and there must not be taken as an indication that the people generally are getting the amount of nourishment that they have been accustomed to, and that a healthy existence demands.

8. In the Voilpaud Taluq, there are about 11,000 people on relief works. Camps for feeding the destitute are being established at Voilpaud and Peelair, and already about 500 persons are receiving relief in this form. The reduced state of wages had been introduced only one week before my inspection at Goorunkonda, and the number were said to be decreasing under the influence of the lower scale. Payments are made only once a week, and I heard of instances in which some gangs had gone without their pay, for nearly three weeks, owing to delays in the checking of pay abstracts, and in getting money from the treasury.

x/-

8/-

9. The current price of rice in this neighbourhood is about 13⅓ lbs. for the rupee. One anna does not purchase a lb. of grain, even when the cooly has the money in his hand to buy on the most favourable terms. If he has not the ready money, the circumstances are greatly against him, for he must take advances of grain on such terms as the bazaar dealers are pleased to arrange.

10. The Deputy Collector informs me that he hears frequently of instances in which the coolies spend their weekly wages for a three or four days' supply of food, starving, or doing as they best can, for the remainder of the week. Hardships of this kind are inevitable, perhaps under a system of deferred payments, and I have already given my views on the importance of this confessedly "experimental" subsistence wage being paid at short intervals. I have no doubt whatever that the system of paying in arrears, leads to many abuses other than the mere disadvantage of buying food on credit.

7/-

11. After leaving Muddanapally, the country towards Goorunkonda (16 miles) is very dry. There is little or no cultivation in progress. The

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trees are bare of leaves, and there is every indication of scarcity of water and food. From Goorukonda to Rayachoti, (24 miles) things are, if possible, still worse. The country is simply a desert, with hardly a green spot to relieve the monotonous colour of the burnt up soil.

m/-

12. I arrived at Rayachoti, the head quarter station of the taluq of that name on the morning of the 27th, and at once proceeded to see the shed in which the indigent poor were being accommodated. I arrived on the ground soon after daylight, and save some very fearful pictures of starvation, about 150 were sleeping in the shed.

13. The officer in charge of the relief works at Rayachoti, Mr. Cotton had unfortunately been struck down by an attack of confluent small-pox (contracted in the discharge of his duties) and had been sent into Cuddapah for treatment. The tahsildar and his deputy were both absent in other parts of the district. A camp superintendent, a young lad fresh from school, had gone in ill to Cuddapah on the 19th and had not returned, and thus it happened that there was nobody to give me any information or to show me what was being done; but Mr. Mathews, a Supervisor of the D. P. W., who resides at Rayachoti, but who has no official connection with relief operations, and a catechist of the London Mission, M. Terevengalaga, who is temporarily employed under Mr. Cotton in feeding the people at the relief-house.

14. The applicants for gratuitous relief are increasing in this taluq in a ratio that is very significant of the state of things amongst the poorer classes. On the 5th instant there were 360 persons receiving one meal of cooked food daily, while on the 27th, the date of my visit, the numbers had gone up to 1,065.

15. Two temporary sheds had been put up some time ago near the Town, for the reception of the sick and infirm, but the relief camp, although progressing, is not yet ready for occupation. This has been due to the sickness and absence of officials, and to the difficulty of getting materials for the huts. The camp is placed on the left bank of the river and about

a mile from the town. About 30 "lean to" huts were in course of construction, and I trust that no time will be lost in completing the arrangements for sheltering the destitute poor. At present the small town of Rayachoti is inconveniently crowded by the villagers who have been sent in to be fed at the relief camp.

16. The relief feeding takes place in an enclosed yard to the east of the town, in a tope near the river. The space is very limited, and the number to be fed very considerable. A large number of the recipients of food were suffering from small-pox, a disease which is very prevalent just now in Rayachoti. Most of the people receiving relief were evidently proper objects of charity, but there were a few whose destitution was not immediately apparent. The taluq vaccinator is working in the relief house, and has already vaccinated a good number, but the bringing of these small-pox cases into a crowded yard to be fed where they sit in close contact with others who have not had the disease, is very dangerous to the public health. There is no medical officer of any description at Rayachoti, and, consequently, nothing has been done to segregate the sick affected with contagious diseases.

17. Up to the time of my visit the feeding consisted of a single meal of 12 oz. of rice, except to the sick who had a little extra food. I informed the Superintendent of the sanction of Government to the issue of two meals daily to the destitute received into relief camps, and of the increase of grain allowance to 20 ozs. per diem. In the *sheds* there were some very miserable objects of starvation, and the more sickly ones were dying at the rate of 2 or 3 per diem. I saw some 50 or 60 persons here who cannot possibly survive many days or weeks. One young girl, about ten years of age, a mere skeleton, on being lifted upright by her mother, fell down in a faint from sheer weakness.

18. Afer seeing the feeding at the relief-house I went to see the Subsidiary jail—a very miserable place in the heart of the town—in the same building with the old taluq cutcherry. The inside yard was crowded with stores of

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Government ~~good~~ rice shutting out what little air might naturally reach the lock-up allotted for prisoners. On my way back to the bungalow, just on the outskirts of the town I came upon the dead body of an old Mussalman who had apparently got so far towards the relief kitchen when he fell down and died about two hours before I passed by. His cooking pots (quite empty) lay by his side. Scenes like this, according to Mr. Supervisor Mathews, have not been infrequent of late about Rayachoti. In January last, after an outbreak of cholera amongst coolies employed on a large tank, some fifty-three human bodies were left exposed in the bed of the river which runs by the town, and I learn from him as well as other district officials, that a very considerable number of bodies have been found by them in position indicating that they have died solitary and alone, away from help and friends.

19. I sent for the village moonsiff, to ascertain the mortality registered in the town of Rayachoti during the last few months. He brought me an extract for the register showing 66 deaths in December, 32 in January, 46 in February and 42 in March up to the [illegible]h Instant. As the catechist informs me that more than the number 42 entered for March have died in the feeding camp sheds, I think it is quite clear that the registration does not give anything like the true rate of mortality. He shows no mortality at all for small pox, while the great prevalence and virulence of this malady renders it certain that many deaths must have been due to it. A child of the catechist's died of small pox last week, and the Brahmin Police Inspector of this station told me that his wife and four persons of his household were laid up with the disease, and that hardly a house was free of it. Of the 144 deaths registered in the three months ending February, 134 are stated to have been from "cholera." Rayachoti is only a small town of about 3,000 inhabitants, but being filled with indigent emigrants, the mortality is sure to be high. I did not find any arrangements in force for recording the deaths and causes of death of the sick poor residing in the relief sheds. I propose to address district authorities on the necessity of keeping accurate

records of mortality in the various relief camps, as is now being done in the larger camps near Madras.

20. From enquiries I have been making, I am quite certain that our system of death-registration in the provinces has to a great extent broken down, and that we shall never know the true mortality of this dreadful season of famine and pestilence, from the records of the village accountants. When the dead are so numerous that they lie unburied, when people leave their villages by wholesale, and when village officials fly from their posts in panic, we can never get accurate accouuts of the vital statistics. I mention the subject here, because I think it is right the Government should know that the facts coming to my knowledge indicate a very high mortality of certain classes of the population, and that this mortality is very largely connected with the defective food supplies of the people, and that we must not expect to find the true mortality entered in the village registers.

21. Cholera is still prevailing in Rayachoti. Two persons, members of separate families, came to me to beg for medicines, for persons just attacked. The catechist, before alluded to, has some knowledge of medicine, and has been doing a good deal in aiding the poor. I trust it will be practicable to place a good native medical man in charge of Rayachoti and the relief camps, and that no time will be lost in completing the camp, and placing the relief operations under the charge of a European official. These, I think, are the measures most practically needed.

22. *Relief Coolies.*—I saw only seven gangs of coolies who were at work, either on roads, or in making the new camp, somewhat more than 300 in number. The proportion of sickly and weakly were about the same as in the gangs of the Voilpaud Taluq. (My original figures were vitiated by taking a gang of carpenters employed in hutting, as relief men, whereas the carpenters earn from four to six annas a day, and should not have been classed as relief coolies).

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23. The town of Rayachoti is very badly off for water: Seeing it in its present state of dearth and drought, I am glad to think that Government have decided not to move the head-quarters of the district from Cuddapah to this place.

The sand of the river bed is quite dry, and wells sunk in solid rock in the river bed yield but a very scanty water-supply. Cuddapah, on the other hand, is bearing the strain on its water-supply very well, and a slight fresh in the Booga river has tended to restore the springs along the river valley.

24. I left Rayachoti for Cuddapah on the evening of the 27th, arrived at Cuddapah on the 28th and waited there to meet the Sanitary Commissioner with the Government of India, who has been deputed by the Government of India to visit and report on the relief labourers in this Presidency. I met Dr. Townsend on the 29th instant and conferred with him on the subjects of which he was desirous of being acquainted and inspected with him some of the Cuddapah gangs of coolies, working on the large tank. Having experienced an attack of fever in the journey through the upland of North Arcot and Cuddapah, I have returned for a few days to Madras for the despatch of arrears of work in the Easter holidays, preparatory to taking up the inspection of the Bellary district.

W. R. C.

Lawrence Asylum Press, W. H. Moore.—1877.

W. the Collector [illegible] European if possible, to

[illegible] a left x

Read

Sanʸ Commʳ's Report on the Voilpad and Royachoti Talugs & the condition of the relief coolies &c therein.

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G. O. d/ 7th April 1877

Communicated to the Colr. of Cuddapah whose immediate attention is drawn to the statements made by Dr. Cornish relative to payments to labourers at Gurramkonda being made only once a week & to even ~~greater~~ greater delay having sometimes occurred. Measures shd. be at once taken to see that gangs are paid ~~daily~~ as ~~ordered~~ directed ~~at least every second day of the daily payments ordered in G.O. No. 1088 of the 17th March are not practicable.~~

at least every second day if the daily payments ordered in G.O. No. 1088 of the 17th ulto are not practicable.

~~requesting full explan of his~~

~~& directing that~~

BCh 14

WH 3/4 JMB

2. Steps should be taken to place the Royachoti Relief Camp in charge of an efficient officer

an officer shd be detached to the place by Govt. sending an extra Native [illegible] to the Collector of [illegible]

~~supply [illegible] the Govt. Com~~
~~suggested by the Sanitary~~
~~Commr.~~, and to ~~provide~~ serve for feeding
the paupers at the Camp
~~those~~ suffering from
Small-pox ~~to [illegible]~~
in ~~close contact with the~~ a different place from
other recipients of relief.

× Newly [illegible] district

3. The neglect of his duty by the Village Munsiff of Rozeahti in respect of the registration of deaths which have occurred there should be promptly noticed -

J.H.S.
31/3/77

4. The Govt. highly appreciate the services of the Catechist Mr. Tiruvengadam.

J. A. S.

The G.O. from a
high estimate of
the Catechist's
service

Send Copy to the Sanitary Commr.
5 P.C. 2/17 April 77
3500 the Board of Revenue
6 to the Collector of Cuddapah
6 the Financial Dept
21 the P W Dept
6 the Accountant General

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12

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10.4.7

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Put with the Mem
B[illegible] 17/4

Not in the Mem
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Memo 1366

Dr. Cousins his report on Registration & [illegible] has been in Circn. on the 31st ult. It has not been returned & is urgently wanted to go with the Despatch to the Secy. of State.

J. H. [illegible]
Asst. Secy.

6/4/77

6.10 pm