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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

REVENUE DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. 1405 Press
~~B.P. No.~~ Mis.

Dated 12-4-1877 1877.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
12th April 1877.*

Famine Relief.

No. 282. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 3rd April 1877:—

Read the following letter from A. WEDDERBURN, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore, to H. E. STOKES, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Coimbatore, 27th March 1877, No. 103.

In submitting my report on the progress of famine-relief and state of the district, I have the honor to note that the incidence of distress was provided against by the earliest possible measures of proposed relief; that plans were organised in the month of November, and sanctioned before there was immediate need of their being carried into effect; and, therefore, the progress of relief operations has been gradual, with a tendency to increase as the season advanced without improvement, and as agricultural operations by degrees diminished, and then in some places entirely ceased.

2. That there was a great decrease of agricultural operations in the months of December and January, when, in ordinary times, a large breadth of dry cultivation would naturally have been harvested, was evident enough from my inspection of the dry crops, which, for the most part, were not worth harvesting, though, to a considerable extent, they afforded a fodder for the cattle.

3. The worst taluqs as regards failure of produce, so far as I could judge from inspection or information, were Palladam, Oodumalpetta, Erode, Diarapuram, and Caroor.

4. A large part of the Coimbatore Taluq, away from the well cultivation which is characteristic of the drainage line of the Noyal Valley, suffered equally as regards dry crops; even where, from better land and along the western extremity of the taluq, the heads had formed, there was scarcely any grain in them. This was the case where the dry crop had not the supplement of a well, but, even with such assistance, the yield was far below par.

5. As regards relief operations, these commenced in Oodumalpetta on the 25th November 1876. Mr. McWatters was next in the field on the 27th November. The Tahsildar of Erode, an elderly official, but of great energy and resource, at once collected tools and organised gangs in the Erode Taluq. Then, Mr. Gordon Mackenzie got relief operations well started in Palladam on the 7th December; but this being so extensive a taluq and Oodumalpetta requiring an officer for itself, I obtained the services of Mr. J. H. Cook, of the Survey, who has been most energetic; all these officers have turned out most excellent work.

6. Task-labor being insisted on from the first, there was no possibility of making an easy livelihood, while the early institution of relief prevented any progress coming to a head. The consequence has been that the laborers are in fair case.

7. In my own division, I found of the artisans of the Town, almost only one class, the weavers in distress. Suitable task-work was found for them; they were, of course, not such good workers as those inured to agricultural implements. About 1,500 were employed, but on the reduction of the men's wage from about 2 annas to 1-6, and others in proportion, a number including also some coolies from adjacent villages went away, as they said the reduced wage could not support them.

8. The gradual increase is thus, if it needs any explanation, explained.

9. As regards the northern division it soon appeared that Collegal was in no need of relief, the wages attracted no one, higher were demanded, and other means of employment visible. No works were, therefore, prosecuted there.

10. In the Balaghat or highland division of Sattiamangalam, the Deputy Tahsildar had sounded a note of alarm, and funds were at once provided; but further inquiry showed that in this sparsely-peopled region there was no real demand for work, and the villagers there generally have stores above their own wants. Large fields are cultivated with dry grains at a very easy assessment. The Deputy Tahsildar was found to be an untrustworthy alarmist.

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12th April 1877.*

11. As regards Sattiamangalam proper, the wet harvest of the five channels of the Bhowany occupied for some time the laboring class. At its completion, however, there seems a demand for labor, and consequently the repair of the main roads traversing this very important taluq were put in hand for an effective improvement.

12. Bhowany is more than half highland, a grazing country. In the line of the Cauvery, however, there are villages from Cauveripuram to Bhowany, an important road totally neglected in favor of a ghaut line over the Burghoor range of hills, involving a lift and descent of 2,000 feet constructed at considerable expense; but from the lift and the uninhabited nature of the country, not ever likely to be frequented. The Cauveripuram, an old native track connecting villages, was therefore put in hand, and progress is being made under Mr. C. A. Mackenzie Deputy Collector's supervision.

Near the cusbah Bhowany there are important roads leading in all directions; these are being well repaired.

13. I have now gone a round of the district. Rs. 1,89,400 have been spent up to 24th March, but there is ample to show for the money the people have not as yet suffered. Provision has been made by estimates up to Rupees 4,98,000 for the continuance of work for several months, and whatever irrigation works need repair are being taken in hand. These are chiefly clearance of silted channels, which is an easy work suited for unskilled labor; the rates are the same as in the Public Works Department.

14. Railway feeders, wherever there was an opening for them, have been entered in the list of works. The district in general is very fairly connected already with the railway, but further access is being given to some new trial-line stations.

15. The ordinary wages which were 2, 14, and 1 anna sufficed at first to maintain the workers and their dependents. These included the whole of the industrious and necessitous poor. Professional beggars are a different class. So long as gratuitous relief can be obtained, they wander about and gravitate towards large villages or cusbah towns.

16. Where these have collected, beyond the power of private charity, a Government contribution is being afforded, but this will not be extended to such as can earn their own livelihood.

17. Relief Committees, composed of leading inhabitants as well as officials, are being organized at the probable centres of relief. This was not begun at first, because the institution of Government relief removes the incentive to native charity, and it is as well to keep this resource in hand till the need exceeds the inclination of the gratuitous relievers, whose charity is as may be supposed, somewhat indiscriminate.

18. There has been a very severe visitation of cholera, which shows but little sign of abatement. For the most part it has been of a sporadic nature, but a recent attack in a village near Coimbatore was most remarkable, and so far as the Civil Surgeon's and my inquiries went inexplicable. Our inquiries were directed as to whether there was evidence of contagion, but the first person attacked had not apparently been in an infected locality. The village was on high and open ground, cleaner than ordinary villages, not in a distressed part of the taluq. No damaged grain had apparently been used, but 30 persons were taken ill and died in the short space of twelve days out of a total number of 52 attacked in a population of 90.

19. My Dresser was at once despatched with medicine, a cholera shed was built, houses were fumigated, but all to little effect. The water used was from the usual well, the water of which was taken for analysis and found to be organically free from any pollution. It is the ordinary step well of the country. There was an outbreak of cholera at Mettapolliam in the beginning of last month. I had been there on several occasions to improve the sanitary state of the place, organized a dispensary and sick sheds in case of need. The total number attacked were 70, of whom 42 died. They were some from Coffee estates, others residents. They were attended by the Hospital Assistant formerly stationed by Government at this place, and now entertained by the new Municipality. A large and valuable stock of medicines has been procured at the expense of the Local Fund Board, and the dispensary is likely to be a great boon to the place.

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12th April 1877.*

20. The more valuable cattle of the ryots were taken care of; there is no sensible depreciation of this stock. But of the inferior animals possessed by the poorer cultivators there have been considerable sales owing to inability to maintain them in the absence of fodder and pastures. Even the hill-pasturage were insufficient. Besides the usual grazing stock in the north of the district where a breed of cattle resembling that of Mysore is raised. Herds were driven up to the Sattiamangalum hills, only to find deficient grass and no water. Still further north in the Bhowany Taluq Mr. Mackenzie saw great ravages of murrain which even attacked deer and bison. This was also observed in another part of the hills by the Deputy Conservator of Forests, North Coimbatore.

21. On the hills in the west I learned, from personal inquiry, that cattle on the Nilgiri slopes still have a maintenance. In the south I inspected the lower ranges of the Anamallays early in January. These presented the appearance of March as to season. The grass up to 4,000 feet was all dried up, and the cattle roved about apparently eating leaves. The ryots do not like taking their cattle to the higher ranges, 6,000 feet, as the cold piercing dry winds are very unfavorable to stock.

The year will, therefore, be an unfavorable one for cattle.

22. There has been a gradual depression of water in wells. But these have been, and are still being, deepened.

23. The working staff of the district has been increased by one European officer, Mr. J. H. Cook, of the Survey, and by numerous Native subordinates of the Survey and Settlement Departments. The supervision, though arduous, is not beyond control. Three Tahsildars have distinguished themselves.

24. Tahsildar of Erode, the oldest official, but not the least effective. He was complemented by Sir Richard Temple on the state of his relief gargs.

Of the younger men, Seetharamiah, Tahsildar of Panadum, received also commendation. The Caroor Tahsildar, Natt Streenivas Row, also a recent appointment, has well justified his selection. These officers have worked well and effectually, and I am glad to notice calmness without the tendency to exaggeration and honest work.

Others have come short. Some have apparently, by their habits, incapacitated themselves from active exertion so needed in a time of emergency, thus throwing a much greater weight of anxiety and exertion on their European superiors; such apply for sick certificate when a press of work comes on. Their case, however, will be considered hereafter; meanwhile, all now in employment are reported effective.

25. I have only further to add that the origin of a remarkable fluctuation in the numbers relieved arose from the order prescribing that the numbers on a certain day were to be recorded. This might be pay-day when no work was in hand, or it might be a day or two intervened, when shifting numbers from one work to another, but the practice now is when there is a day's stoppage on the day of report, to enter the previous day's numbers; otherwise the return as a comparison would be quite fallacious.

26. It may be premature to offer an opinion as to the total number which may come on relief, and however may fall when ploughing follows. The ground is ploughed many times before the seed is sown and even when it is never sown. This may relieve works to some extent of the poorer cultivators. Judging from the past and the gradual increase, the numbers having been kept down by somewhat rigid task-work, I should hope not to exceed Rupees 30,000. But for the task-work Mr. McWatters is of opinion, and I agree with him, that our numbers would have been doubled, but allowing that Rupees 30,000 are not exceeded. The projected relief-works, over four lakhs of Rupees, of which up to date 19-10 lakhs have been spent, seem likely to meet the emergency.

Submitted to Government.

2. The Collector seems to have his works well under control, and to have gauged the extent of distress in his district with considerable accuracy.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
12th April 1877.*

3. The outbreak of cholera reported in paragraph 18 is very remarkable. It is satisfactory to learn that most of the Tahsildars and other officers have been found equal to the emergency.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) H. E. STOKES,
Secretary.

No. 233.

ORDER THEREON, 12th April 1877, No. 1,405.

Miscellaneous.

RECORDED.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Board of Revenue.
„ the Financial Department.
„ the Public Works Department.

Ed. F. R. Bantleman.

1405

No 282 Read the following
 Revenue Dept
 Proceedings of the Dykes
 dated 3^d April 1877.

Read the following

Ch 103.

No 3276. From

A. W. Woodburn Esq
 Collector of Amherst

Lois J. D. Stokes Esq
 Secretary to the
 Dykes Riv. Mass.

Sir.
 In submitting my
 report on the progress of
 famine relief & state of
 the district, I have the honor
 to note that the incidence
 of distress was provided
 against by the earliest

CONF. OF 1877
 REVENUE
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 1877

possible measures of pro-
posed relief - that plans
were organized in the month
of Nov & sanctioned before
there was immediate need
of their being carried into
effect, & therefore the
progress of relief operations
has been gradual, with
a tendency to increase as
the season advanced without
improvement & as agricultural
operations by degrees
diminished & then in some
places entirely ceased.

2. That there was a great
decrease of agricultural
operations in the months

of Dec - Jan when ^{Nov 5/52} in
ordinary times a large bread
of dry cultivation would
naturally have been har-
vested. was evident enough
from my inspection of the
dry crops which for the
most part were not worth
harvesting tho' to a con-
siderable extent they
afforded a fodder for the
cattle.

3. The worst Taluqs as
regards failure of produce,
so far as I could judge from
inspection or information,
were Palladam, Codamel,
Jeta Erode & Charapuram

Haroor.

4. A large part of the Coimbatore Taluk, away from the well cultivation, which is characteristic of the drainage line of the Vayal valley suffered equally as regards dry crops, even where from better lands & along the western extremity of the Taluk the heads had found. There was scarcely any grain in them. This was the case where the dry crop had ~~not~~ the supplement of a well but even with such assistance, the yield was

3
was far below par.
5. As regards relief operations these commenced in Godamalpeta on the 25th Nov/76. Mr. McWalter was next in the field on the 27th Nov. The Tahildar of Erode, an elderly official but of great energy & resources at once collected tools & organized gangs in the Erode Taluk. Then Mr. Gordon Mackenzie got relief operations well started in Palladam on the 7th Dec. - but this being so extensive a Taluk & Godamalpeta requiring

an Officer for itself
I obtained the services of
Mr J. H. Cook of the Survey
who has been most energy-
tic. all these Officers have
turned out most excellent
work.

6. Task labor being in-
sisted on from the first
there was no possibility
of making an easy living.
Hood while the early
institution of relief pre-
vented any distress coming
to a head. The consequence
has been that the laborers
are in fair case.

7. In my own division

1405/1 4
I found of the artisans of
the Town, almost only
one class. The weavers in
distress suitable basket
work was found for them.
They were of course not
such good workers as those
incurred to agricultural
implements, about 1500
were employed, but on
the reduction of the man's
wage from about 2 annas
to 1-6 & others in propor-
tion, a number including
also some coolies from ad-
jacent villages went away
as they said the reduced wage
could not support them.

8. The gradual increase is thus, if it needs any explanation, explained.

9. As regards the Northern Division it soon appeared that Jolligal was in no need of relief. The wages attracted no one. Higher were demanded & other means of employment visible. No works were therefore prosecuted there.

10. In the Kalagant or high land division of Rattiamangalam, the Dy. Tahsildar had sound. To a note of alarm, & funds were at once provided but further

5/10/85
5.
further enquiry showed that in this sparsely peopled region, there was no real demand for work & the villagers there generally have stores above their own wants. Large fields are cultivated with dry grains at a very easy expense. The Dy. Tahsildar was found to be an unbacked alarmist.

11. As regards Rattiamangalam proper the wet harvest of the fine channels of the Khoru was occupied for some time the laboring class. At its completion however

There seemed a demand for labour & consequently the repair of the main roads traversing this very important Taluq were put in hand for an effective improvement.

12. Whowany is more than half high land, a grazing country with few inhabitants. In this line of the Canry however, there are villages from Cairani Furam to Whowany - An important road totally neglected, in favor of a short line over the Kungoor range of hills

^{120/2}
involving a lift & descent of 2000 ft constructed at considerable expense, but from the lift & the uninhabited nature of the country, not ever likely to be frequented. The Cairani Furam, an old native track connecting villages was therefore put in hand & progress is being made under Mr C. A. Mackenzie by Colth's supervision.

Near the custah Whowany there are important roads leading in all directions these are being well repaired.

13. I have now gone a

road of the Dist. Rs 189490
have been spent up to 24th
March, but there is an-
ple to show for the money.
The people have not as yet
suffered. Provision has been
made by estimates up to
Rs 498000 for the continuance
of work for several months
& whatever irrigation
works need repair, are
being taken in hand.
These are chiefly clearance
of silted channels, which
is an easy work suited for
unskilled labor. The rates
are the same as in the
D. P. W.

Railway

14. Railway funder, ^{1405/10} where
ever there was an opening
for them have been enter-
ed in the list of works.
The Dist in general is very
fairly connected already with
the Railway, but further
accrues is being given to some
new trial line stations.
15. The ordinary ways ^{which}
were 2, 1½ & 1 anna suffered
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These included the whole
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-rity is as may be supposed
somewhat indiscriminate.

18. There has been a very
severe visitation of cholera
which shows but little
sign of abatement. For the
most part it has been
of a sporadic nature, but
a recent attack ⁱⁿ ~~near~~ a
village near Lumbahou
was most remarkable & so

Far as the local surgeon
& my enquiries went in-
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were directed as to whether
there was evidence of con-
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-fected locality. The vil-
-lage was on high & open
ground cleaner than or-
-dinary villages, not in a
disturbed part of the taluk.
No damaged grain had ap-
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39 persons were taken ill
& died in the short space
of 12 days out of a total

number of 52 attacked in
a population of 90.

19. My dresser was at
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-dicine, a cholera shed
was built, houses were ju-
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effect. The water used
was from the usual well
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taken for analysis & found
to be organically free from
any pollution. It is the
ordinary step well of the
country. There was a worst
break of cholera at Akha
pottim in the beginning

of last month. I had been
there on several occasions
to improve the sanitary
state of the place, or
organized a dispensary & sick
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total number attacked
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They were some from Caffi
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They were attended by the
Hospital: & first^{ly} former
by stationed by force at
this place & now entertain-
ed by the new Municipality.
A large & valuable stock
of medicines has been pro-
cured at the expense of the

Local Fund Board ^{1405/10} & the
dispensary is likely to be
a great boon to the place.
20. The more valuable
cattle of the ryots were
taken care of & there is no
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this stock. Not of the in-
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by the poorer cultivators
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-bearing saline hills, only
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which even attacked deer
& bison. This was also ob-
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the hills by the by (conserva-
tor of Forests North (aim-
bore).

21. On the hills in the
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1405/11
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23. The working staff
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24. Tahsildar of Erode
the oldest official, but
not the least effective.
He was complimented by
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Of the younger men
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These Officers have worked well & effectively & I am glad to notice calmness without the tendency to exaggeration & honest work.

Others have come short some have apparently by their habits incapacitated themselves from active exertion so needed in a time of emergency. Thus throwing a much greater weight of anxiety & exertion on their European superiors

1 such apply for sick certificates when a jump of work comes on. Their conduct however will be considered hereafter. Meanwhile all now in employment are reported effective.

25. I have only further to add ~~that~~ the origin of a remarkable fluctuation in the numbers relieved arose from the order prescribing that the number on a certain day were to be recorded. This might be pay day when no work was in hand, or it might be

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would have been doubled
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posed relief work over

4. Last of Rs, of which up to
date 19/10 has have been
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meet the emergency.

Gombakani } I have from
Collis Affair } (2) St. Martin's
27th March/77 } for Collis

Submitted to Govt.

The Collis seems to have
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of distress in his district
with considerable accuracy.

The outbreak of cholera
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22

1405/86 15
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to the emergency.

(True Copy & Extract)

W. H. Jones
Secretary

To The Adl. Secretary to Govt.
Rev. Secy to Govt.

22

Dec. 1877 Sept
72.2152

Pro. of the City
New

Oct 3. 1877
Page 5

Washington
is better known
the both of them
had no reference
one the progress
of American cities
in his hands

With Order

Oct 12 1877 No. 1405

Ch. 1405

Received

12.09.1877

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