

- (1) Number of pages 26.
(2) Date of repair _____
(3) Initials of the Referencer _____

TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	1835	Press
B.P. No.		Mis.
Dated	28. 5. 1877-107.	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

REVENUE DEPARTMENT

Famine Relief.

No. 541. From Surgeon-Major W. R. CORNISH, F.R.C.S., Sanitary Commissioner for Madras, to J. H. GARSTIN, Esq., Additional Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, dated 8th May 1877, No. 431.

2. In my report, dated 29th April, I mentioned that the Honorable Sir Richard Temple had, at Goondacul on the 24th April, picked out 41 men from a gang of 180, who, from weakness and emaciation, were obviously unfit for work, and whom he considered should be fed at a relief-house without work. Of these persons, so far as could be ascertained, only 12 had recently come on the works, the remainder having been present for two or more months. In addition to these 41, I noted 18 others who, in my opinion, were in very feeble condition. As, at a previous inspection on 23rd February 1877, Dr. Hervey, Sir Richard Temple's medical attendant, specially comments on the fine physique of the Goondacul gangs, the only inference I can draw from the fact is, that, to quote Sir Richard Temple's own words, the men had been getting "thinner and thinner" and "weaker and weaker, till at last they have had to be drafted off to gratuitous relief-camps as unfit to work."

[illegible]

Total ... 2

4. Now the experience of the Palaveram works is the experience more or less of every relief-work in the country. Of the people who come to work, some few remain permanently, but the great majority are constantly shifting from week to week, and month to month. The weakly ones I imagine, from Mr. Howe's experience in the Bellary District, are turned out of the gangs by the maistrics, or else give up in despair and wait quietly at home to die.

5. I am quite aware of the fact that in the several labor-gangs are to be met many persons who have not been perceptibly reduced in flesh or strength, and their presence amongst the laborers, no doubt, tends to the support of the view that

1/27/71 Richard Temple

the relief wage is, in itself, sufficient to keep a man in health and strength. According to my experience, these well-to-do looking people are mainly composed of two classes.

- (1.) Of small land-holders and servants of ryots who have obviously other means of livelihood, besides what they get from the Government relief.
- (2.) Of the flesh-eating castes to whom the famine has brought an enormous supply of cheap and nourishing food, and who have been exceptionally well off during the period when cattle were dying or being sold for a mere trifle to the lower castes who use animal food.

6. A very close and minute inspection of relief laborers in various parts of the country has satisfied me that it is chiefly the above classes who are in good physical condition; and I think it has been the presence of so many of the flesh-eating classes amongst the gangs that has tended to give wrong impressions regarding the actual condition of the people as a whole.

7. From the constant changes going on in the individuals of the several gangs on relief labor, it is clear that there is the greatest difficulty in tracing out the effects of wages on their health and strength; but the impressions of famine officers like Messrs. Price, Gribble, Oldham, Murray, Ferricks, and others, who have had daily opportunities of observations, cannot be likely set aside, and I think there can be no reasonable doubt that of the vast number who go for a short time on relief-works and then leave them, many do so from a conviction that the wage is insufficient for the maintenance of their health and strength, and that many of these gradually drift into a low condition and die in their homes, or ultimately come in great numbers on our gratuitous feeding camps.

In my report on Bellary I alluded to the case of a man who had been on relief-works, but whose wife died of starvation, and afterwards two children died in the same way, the third child being in an hopeless state when I saw it, and the father himself so stricken that I doubt if he can survive.

8. Government are well aware of the rapid and enormous increase of gratuitous relief,—not for young children or old people only, but to those in the prime of life,—in all the distressed districts. This is a sure indication of increasing weakness and diminishing vitality amongst the laboring classes.

9. The death registration in the famine districts, as compared with that in districts which have not hitherto required special means of relief, tells the same tale. In the returns before me for the

Madray.	Cuddapah.
Chingleput.	Bellary.
Nellore.	Kurnool.
North Arcot.	Salem.

month of February 1877, the registered deaths in the eight famine districts as per margin were in the annual ratio of 81.3 per thousand of the population, while

in the remaining districts of the Presidency (with the exception of Tinnevely and South Canara, the figures of which have not come to hand), the registered mortality was only 23.2 per thousand. The people, in fact, of the famine districts in the month of February were dying nearly four times as fast as in other parts of the Presidency. Cholera and small-pox have been general throughout the Presidency, but it is only in the famine tracts that this excessive mortality has been going on (the figures for the months of December and January are given in my letter and memorandum, No. 243, of 6th April.)

10. It would seem, therefore, to be idle to dispute or question the fact of the connection between the famine and mortality of the population. The connection between the experimental famine wage and the mortality of the laborers is not so easy to trace, for the reason that the labor gangs fluctuate so violently as regards their personnel that we cannot trace out the history of the individual workers with the precision that is so desirable in an experiment like that of Sir Richard Temple's; and secondly the destruction of life by chronic insufficiency of food is a

Foots.—Pigs, carrying from 70 to 100 lbs. of flesh, have been sold for 8 annas each during the famine.

very slow, though very certain, process. It is easy enough to make assertions on either view of the case when proof is impracticable. The difficulty lies in following out the history of a sufficient number of individuals. As regards those weakened by insufficient food, it seems quite obvious that the tendency would be to their elimination from the working gangs and to their joining the ranks of the sick and the diseased, which swells so largely the mortality bills of the famine districts.

11. But however this may be, I must again take my stand on the insufficiency of the famine wage to supply the food necessary for the physiological requirements of the body. The practical results show that the wages have been inadequate to keep the people steadily at work, and the increasing numbers of persons unfitted for work show that the famine relief has not met fully the necessities of the people in the way of keeping up their health and strength. That there are many able-bodied persons still remaining on relief-works I very gladly admit; but I do not think that they have had to thank the famine wage for their present condition, while I am quite certain that in the case of those who have had no other means of support, or in those unable or unwilling to use the abnormal supply of cheap animal food, the effects have been, and will be, disastrous.

12. I infer from the present Minute by Sir Richard Temple, as well as from some of his earlier reports, that he supposes the rescue of persons who have fallen into a weak and emaciated state from prolonged ill-feeding to be a very simple matter, necessitating only care and the judicious use of nourishing food. But my own warnings to the Government have all along been distinct on this point, that chronic starvation is a disease practically beyond remedy, and that more good will result from keeping the population from falling into a low state than from any subsequent efforts to save life in the case of those whose vitality has been imperilled by insufficient food for a long period of time. If the famine has taught us anything at all, it has certainly shown us what a very dangerous condition chronic ill-feeding will bring the people to, and the extreme difficulty of remedying this condition by the most careful and humane system of treatment.

13. The great facts to be borne in mind in connection with the system of relief-works is the constant shifting of the units of the gangs, the general preponderance of women in the gangs, thereby showing that some of the able-bodied male population have other sources of employment and most probably of income also. The next two months will prove a very critical time for those who have still strength to work, and it seems to me that, on grounds of public policy, it is highly important that work should be every where found for those who really need it for their maintenance, and that it would be safer to err on the side of liberality in this respect up to the time when the normal agricultural employments of the people are resumed.

14. I suppose no one has yet been able to frame anything like an estimate of the effects of the famine on the population, but, making due allowances for defective registration of mortality and for the inevitable mortality that must outlast the dearth of food, I have grounds for supposing that the population of the affected districts will be reduced in eighteen months' time by one-fifth or one-sixth of the number living before the scarcity commenced. This, of course, is an estimate only based on the current birth and death-rates, and the present generally enfeebled condition of the working classes in the affected districts.

No. 542. From the same officer, dated 11th May 1877, No. 431.

With reference to Minute No. 191, by the Honorable Sir Richard Temple, published in the *Gazette of India* of the 5th instant, page—, I have the honor to state, for the information of His Grace in Council, that my letter, No. 431, of 8th May, was not intended as a complete reply to that Minute, but merely to answer the question put to me by Government in G.O., No. 1,630, of 3rd May, as to the 8th paragraph of that Minute.

Richard Temple

Revenue Department, 28th May 1877, No. 1,835.

2. I am reluctant to prolong a controversy on questions which the Government can practically decide from its every day experience of the course of the famine as well as I can; but I do not wish it to be inferred that because I am silent the statements contained in Sir Richard Temple's Minute are unanswerable. With the permission of Government, I might, if considered advisable, reply to the Minute as a whole; but I do not think any further observations are needed from me on public grounds, and I have no *personal* wish to enter further into the questions at issue.

No. 542-A. ORDER THEREON, 28th May 1877, No. 1,835.

Miscellaneous.

RECORDED with reference to G.O.
of 22nd May 1877, No. 1,788, by which
the rate of wages has been raised.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Sanitary Commissioner.
,, the Board of Revenue.
,, the Financial Department.

Ed. F. R. Bantleman.

by Sir Richard Temple's

No 431.

Office of Sanitary Commissioner
Madras 8th May 1877. 23

From

The Sanitary Commissioner
for Madras

To

The Additional Secretary
to Government.

Fort St George.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of L. O. No 1630 of 3rd inst., and with reference to the question therein raised to submit the following remarks.

2. In my report dated 29th April. I mentioned that the Honble Sir R. Temple, had at Coondacub on the 24th April, picked out 41 men from a gang of 180, who, from weakness and emaciation were obviously unfit for work, and whom he considered should be fed at a relief house, without work. Of these persons, so far as far as ascertained, only twelve had recently come on the works, the remainder having been present for two or more months. In addition to these 41 I noted 18 others, who in my opinion were in very feeble condition. As at a previous inspection on 23rd February 1877. Dr. Hervey, Sir Richard Temple's

Govt. of 1877

REVENUE.

THE SANITARY COMMISSIONER.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

MAY

NOS. 341-312A.

REVENUE DEPT. NO. 1207.

Sir Richard Temple's Minute on Letter No. 1630 of 3rd May 1877. No. 1,788, raising the rate of 27th letters from the Sanitary Commissioner for Madras replying to paragraph 8 & 9.

medical attendant especially comments on the fine physique of the Goudaikul gangs, the only inference I can draw from the fact is that, to quote Sir Richard Temple's own words, the men have been getting "thinner and thinner" and "weaker and weaker, till at last they have had to be drafted off to gratuitous relief camps as unfit to work."

I have in former reports commented on the great fluctuations which occur in the units of gangs on relief works. From a variety of causes the people met with at one inspection are not to be found at a subsequent inspection. For instance, O. Vansomeran, about two months ago weighed 25 men, 25 women, 25 boys, and 25 girls (total 100) of the relief laborers at Palaveram, and at an inspection made conjointly with myself on Thursday the 3rd inst. there were present of the 100 persons.

Men	12
Women	3
Boys	5
Girls	4
	<u>24</u>

That is more than three-fourths of the individuals whose heights, ages, and weights were specially registered, were ^{not} at the works two months subsequently.

Now the experiences of the Palaveram works is the experience, more or less of every relief work in the country. Of the people who come to work, some few remain

permanently, but the great majority are constantly shifting from week to week, and month to month. The weakly ones, I imagine, from Mr. Jones' experience in the Belany district are turned out of the gangs by the main tries, or else give up in despair and wait quietly at home to die.

5. I am quite aware of the fact that in the several labor gangs are to be met many persons who have not been perceptibly reduced in flesh or strength, and their presence amongst the laborers no doubt tends to the support of the view that the relief wage is in itself sufficient to keep a man in health and strength. According to my experience these well-to-do looking people are mainly composed of two classes.

1. Of small landholders, and servants of ryots, who have obviously other means of livelihood besides what they get from the Government relief.

2. Of the flesh-eating castes to whom the famine has brought an enormous supply of cheap and unwholesome food, and who have been exceptionally well off, during the period when cattle were dying or being sold for a mere trifles, to the lower castes who use animal food.

Note - Bullocks, carrying from 50 to 100 lbs of flesh have been sold for 8 annas each during the famine.

A very close and minute inspection of relief laborers in various parts of the country has satisfied me that it is chiefly the above classes who are in good physical condition, and I think it has been the presence of so many of the flesh-eating classes amongst the gangs, that has tended to give wrong impressions regarding the actual condition of the people as a whole.

From the constant changes going on in the individuals of the several gangs on relief labor, it is clear that there is the greatest difficulty in tracing out the effects of wages on their health and strength, but the impressions of famine officers like myself. Since, Grubbs, Oldham, Minney, Ferricks, and others, who have had daily opportunities of observation cannot be lightly set aside, and I think there can be no reasonable doubt that of the vast number who go for a short time on relief works, and then leave them, many do so from a conviction that the wage is insufficient for the maintenance of their health and strength, and that, ^{many} these gradually drift into a low condition and die in their homes, or ultimately come in great numbers on our gratuitous feeding camps.

In my report on Bellary I alluded

to the case of a man who had been on relief works, but whose wife died of starvation and afterwards two children died in the same way, the third child being in an hopeless state when I saw it, and the father himself so stricken, that I doubt if he can survive.

8. Government are well aware of the rapid and enormous increase of gratuitous relief — not for young children, or old people only, but to those in the prime of life, — in all the distressed districts. This is a sure indication of increasing weakness, and diminishing vitality amongst the laboring classes.

9. The death registration in the famine districts, as compared with that in districts which have not hitherto required special means of relief, tells the same tale. In the return before me, for the month of February/77 the registered deaths in the eight famine districts as per margins were in the annual ratio of 21.3 per thousand of the population, while in the remaining districts of the Presidency (with the

Madras
Chingleput.
Nellore
North Arcot.
Andrapah
Bellary
Kurnool
Salem.

exception of Sinnerly and South Cannara
the figures of which have not come to hand.
The registered mortality was only 23.2 per
thousand. The people in fact of the famine
districts in the month of February were dying
nearly four times as fast as in other parts
of the Presidency. Cholera and Smallpox
have been general throughout the Presidency,
but it is only in the famine tracts that
this excessive mortality has been going
on (the figures for the months of December
and January are given in my letter
and memorandum No 243. of 6 April.
10.

It would seem therefore to be
idle to dispute or question the fact of
the connection between the famine and
mortality of the population. The connection
between the experimental famine wage,
and the mortality of the laborers is not
so easy to trace for the reason that the
labor gangs fluctuate so violently as
regards their personnel that we cannot
trace out the history of the individual
workers with the precision that is so
desirable in an experiment, like that
of Sir Richard Semples. And secondly
the destruction of life by chronic in-

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sufficiency of food is a very slow, though
very certain, process. It is easy enough
to make assertions on either side of the
case when proof is impracticable. The
difficulty lies in following out the history
of a sufficient number of individuals.
In regards those weakened by in-
sufficient food, it seems quite obvious
that the tendency would be to their
elimination from the working gangs,
and to their joining the ranks of the
sick and the diseased, which swells
so largely the mortality bills of the
famine districts.

11. But however this may be, I
must again take my stand on the
insufficiency of the famine wage to
supply the food necessary for the physio-
logical requirements of the body. The
practical results show that the wages
have been inadequate to keep the
people steadily at work, and the in-
creasing numbers of persons unfitted
for work show that the famine relief
has not met fully the necessities of
the people in the way of keeping up

their health and strength. That there are many able bodied persons still depending on relief works I very gladly admit; but I do not think that they have had to thank the famine wages for their present condition, while I am quite certain that in the case of those who have had no other means of support, or in those unable or unwilling to use the abnormal supply of cheap animal food, the effects have been, and will be, disastrous.

12. I infer from the present Minutes by Sir Richard Lample; as well as from some of his earlier reports, that he supposes the rescue of persons who have fallen into a weak and emaciated state from prolonged ill feeding to be a very simple matter, necessitating only care and the judicious use of nourishing food. But my own warnings to the Government have, all along been distinct on this point, that chronic starvation is a disease practically beyond remedy, and that more good will result from keeping the population from falling into a low state, than from any subsequent

5 efforts to save life in the case of those whose vitality has been imperilled by insufficient food for a long period of time. If the famine has taught us any thing at all, it has certainly shown us what a very dangerous condition chronic ill-feeding will bring the people to, and the extreme difficulty of remedying this condition by the most careful and humane systems of treatment.

13. The great facts to be borne in mind in connection with the system of relief works is the constant shifting of the units of the gangs, the general preponderance of women in the gangs thereby showing that some of the able bodied male population have other sources of employment and most probably of income also. The next two months will prove a very critical time for those who have still strength to work, and it seems to me that on grounds of public policy it is highly important that work should be every where found for those who really need it, for their

9
maintenance, and that it would be
easier to err on the side of liberality in
this respect, up to the time when the
normal agricultural employments of
the people are resumed.

14. I suppose no one has yet been
able to frame anything like an estimate
of the effects of the famine on the population,
but making due allowances for defective
registration of mortality, and for the in-
evitable mortality that must outlast
the dearth of food, I have grounds for
supposing that the population of the
affected districts will be reduced in
eighteen months time by one fifth or one
sixth, of the number living before the scarcity
commenced. — This of course is an estimate
only — based on the current birth and
death rates, and the present generally
enfeebled condition of the working classes
in the affected districts.

I have the honor to be
Sir,

Your most obedt Servt

W M Cornish. J. R. C.
Sanitary Commissioner
for Madras

No. 484

OFFICE OF SANITARY COMMISSIONER,
MADRAS, 11th May 1877.

From

Sanitary Commissioner, Madras,

To

The Additional Secretary
to Government
Fort St George

With reference to Minute No 191 by the
Honorable Sir Richard Temple published in
the Gazette of India of the 5th Instant page
I have the honor to state for the information
of His Grace-in-Council that my letter
No 431 of 8th May, was not intended
as a complete reply to that Minute, but
merely to answer the question put to me
by Government in G.O. No 162 of 3rd May
as to the 8th para of that Minute.

2. I am reluctant to prolong a
controversy on questions which the
Government can practically decide
from its every day experience of the
course

Recd. 10th May 1877
Jum No 3405

To Sanitary Commr
for Madras

Additional Secy
to Government

Dated 8th May 1877
Per 10th and

Submitting
to Government

Minute on the question
raised in G.O. No 162 of 3rd May

9th May 1877.
G.O. No 28 of 11th May 1877

24-53026-53

course of the game as well as I can,
 but I do not wish it to be inferred
 that because I am silent, the statements
 contained in Sir Richard Temple's
 Minute are unanswerable. With the
 permission of Government, I might,
 if considered advisable, reply to the
 Minute as a whole, but I do not think
 any further observations are needed
 for me, on public grounds, and I have
 no personal wish to enter further
 into the questions at issue.

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your most obedient servant

W. M. Cornish F.R.C.S.

Sanitary Commissioner
 for Madras

CH-5-MC-26-577

542-

of the insufficiency of
of 1 lb of grain as the
basis of famine wages.

CA 28 May 1877 No 1535

Requests orders on 22

will greatly simplify the minute

keeping on the subject

of the insufficiency of

of 1 lb of grain as the

basis of famine wages.

CA 28 May 1877 No 1535

No 484

Dec 11 3 May 1877

Oct 11 2

3rd of June

Secretary to Govt

Mr. Whittemore

for all orders

Sanitary Commission

1877 No 3511

Recd letter from the Sanitary Commission for the
of the 8th May 1877
No. 34543511

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

7
1877/12

From

Sanitary Commissioner for India

Dated

8th & 11th May 1877

FOR ORDERS.

the following letter from

the Sanitary Commission for India

dated 6th May 1877

1877 No 243

has been forwarded to the Sanitary Commission for India

dated 8th May 1877 No 431

has also been forwarded to the Sanitary Commission for India

dated 14th May 1877 No 484

has been forwarded to the Sanitary Commission for India

dated 28th May 1877

As before resolved

to raise the command

rate of wages. These

may be recorded to the

effect of that fact.

And show that

it is not with the

Proceed of Govt

1877

28 May 1877

FOR ORDERS.

20. Sep. 1862. *Samuel Joseph*
 35. d. *St. John's*
 20. d. *St. John's*

C14-5-2756-21

C14-5-20c 26-5-11
 C14-5-20c 26-5-11

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