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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

REVENUE DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. B.P. No.	937	Press. Mis.
Dated	20-6-1878.	197.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Archives 1-5,806-24-2-78.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.
REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

20th June 1878, No. 937.

Read the following paper :—

No. 246. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 5th June 1878, No. 1,497.

Read the following papers :—

From A. McC. WEBSTER, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore, to C. A. GALTON, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 21st May 1878, No. 78.

I HAVE the honor to report that young locusts have appeared in very considerable numbers in the Oodumulpetta Taluq. They seem to have first made their appearance in the villages immediately below the Anamallays; and were evidently hatched there—some swarms appear also to have been hatched in other villages of the taluq.

2. The ryots made no endeavors to destroy them at first, and now that they are about twenty days old, their destruction is more difficult. I have tried to explain to the ryot the methods of destruction alluded to in the extract from the Annual Report (1874) of the Commissioner of Agriculture for the United States published in Board's Proceedings of 17th April 1878, No. 1,000, and have advised them to set all the small boys in their villages to work. In one place (under a tank bund) I came across vast numbers collected in a small space of brushwood and short grass. I sent out the Revenue Inspector next morning to collect the villagers and destroy the locusts by fire, and catching them in cloths if he found the brushwood would not burn. I have not yet heard whether he was successful. I have also requested Mr. Cook, the Special Assistant Collector, to proceed to the southern part of the taluq and collect the villagers for the purpose of exterminating these insects.

3. The damage done by them is very considerable. I have seen many garden fields of young cholum in which the plants were entirely destroyed. As soon as they are able to move, the young locusts commence to migrate and appear like a number of small frogs jumping. The general direction of their migration seems to be north-east.

From the same Officer, dated Coimbatore, 23rd May 1878, No. 81.

I HAVE the honor to forward, for the information of the Board and Government, extracts from the diary of Mr. Cook, Special Assistant in famine charge of Oodumulpetta Taluq, regarding the appearance in that taluq of vast numbers of young locusts.

2. I have already reported on this matter to the Board, and can fully understand that if the swarms are as thick in the southern villages as reported by Mr. Cook they must do an incalculable amount of mischief. Foreseeing that many fields will be devastated, I ordered the Curnams at Jamabandi to inspect and keep a register of all fields so destroyed, as it may be necessary next year to make special remissions of the assessment on such fields.

3. Looking to the serious nature of this insect plague it would, I think, be advisable if Mr. Robertson were deputed to visit the taluq and conduct measures for destroying the locusts. The experience gained here would probably be of great use if similar measures have to be taken in other districts.

P.S.—I have just heard of some swarms of young locusts at Pothanore.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

Extract from the Diary of J. H. COOK, Esq., Special Assistant in charge of State Relief Works, Oodumulpetta, for the Week ending 19th May 1878:—

15th.—Went out to Dhully and beyond to destroy or rather attempt to destroy the locusts. The result of my attempts I will detail hereafter as I wish to mention in this diary what I have seen and done about them.

18th.—Went out to Jellipatty as I heard the locusts were terrible here. I found the fact not exaggerated and determined to encamp here a few days and see what I can do.

19th.—Went to Erisinampatty for money-dole and thence to Jellipatty where I had sent on my things.

I regret here to report that a very great portion of the taluq is infested with young locusts, whose ravages are very distressing. The southern half of the taluq—supposing a line drawn south we go, they are more numerous. All the grass is eaten up and nearly all the garden crops. They must have bred, I think, on the Anamallays and found their way down, for the sides of the hills are covered with them, and having eaten up all the pasturage there, they may be seen marching deliberately down to the villages. To attempt to describe the quantities is impossible. They are also eating, so the Forest Overseer told me, the young bamboos.

As mentioned I went to Dhully and Goorovappa Naicknoor villages for the purpose of attempting to destroy them, but one might as well try to remove the sand from the sea-shore. Arrived at Dhully I rode out to the foot of the hills near Tirumoorthykovil where they were most numerous. Here the ground was literally covered with them. I collected about 100 them (having carefully surrounded them) and set fire to it. Some perished, but they were but a few out of the millions and millions there. I worked for about six hours at this work, and though we did all we could, I do not suppose we effected much. In other cases I lit a fire half round them and got the people to drive them in. In Goorovappa Naicknoor village I did likewise when I found them in the open, but they are now all among the cholam and swarming on to the stalks like a lot of bees. To burn the cholam would never do—to drive them out impossible, for even if temporarily removed, they return at night and complete the destruction. In Dhully and the village I am at present encamped, they are even in the houses, and in some cases the people have been obliged to leave their houses. The destruction done by these locusts is enormous and distressing, when we consider that the cholam now being eaten is the 3rd crop the poor ryots have attempted to grow. As an instance of the damage I would merely take three villages, Dhully, Jellipatty and Manupatty. In the former 600 bullahs, in the second 400, and in the third 100 bullahs of cholam have been totally destroyed, being all that was sown.

* This is a small outturn—One Pothy=192 pucca measures.

Taking the produce of one bullah to be five Rupees destroyed in only three villages. This is for grain alone. The stalks of the cholam grain now are calculated to feed the cattle for a year—but it is all gone—so, what will the cattle do, as the grass is also eaten. About a month ago, when I was down in this part, I saw the cholam springing up in all directions and I was in hopes the ryots were going to have a bumper crop, but now there is really not a blade to be seen, and the few gardens where the cholam is still flourishing and would be ripe soon is now thick with locusts. In another week the whole of the southern part of the taluq will be almost denuded of crops. I am not, I think, exaggerating as I speak from personal observation. The locusts are getting very large and beginning to fly a little. If when they are full size they betake themselves to pastures new by going to the north part of the taluq and commit the same havoc there as they have done here, this taluq will be utterly ruined, and we will have a bigger famine than last year. The ryots fear that the locusts will fly over the taluq as they appear to be all coming from the hills which they have pretty well spoiled. I do not wish to be thought an alarmist, but I really think the locust plague is a very serious matter and will require careful watching. I am doing my best to assist the ryots, and they are also trying their utmost to get rid of the locusts. Let us hope they will. I have received instructions from the local Committee to begin the distribution of Mansion money at once for seed-grain, but do not you think it useless in this part of the taluq where the seed, if sown and springing up, would surely be eaten by the locusts. Most that have seed-grain are afraid to attempt a fourth time. I shall be constantly on the move from village to village and will keep you informed of the progress of this plague, for such we may call it.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) A. McC. WEBSTER,
Collector.

SUBMITTED for the information and orders of Government.

2. In the Board's view the matter is very serious and one in which the avoidance of delay is of grave importance. Every day strengthens the young locusts, increases their voracity and, what is worse, strengthens their powers of locomotion, and thus enhances the difficulty of dealing with them, till, on attaining their wings, they are beyond control and will spread themselves over a far wider area than they have yet visited. If the weather continue dry and favorable to the hatching of ova and maturing of larvae the plague may well become in localities a worse evil to the Government, the people, and the cattle than even the famine which has been experienced. In view of such a possibility, not to say probability, and in view of the importance of not losing time, the Board have taken the responsibility of issuing the following instructions without awaiting the previous sanction of Government, in the hope that they may have the approval of Government till such time as the Government itself may issue other orders, or further experience indicates the advisability of any amendment thereof.

3. All Collectors are directed to cause their taluq officials to be on the look-out for and report to them the earliest appearance of young locusts, which may specially be expected in the track of the recent flights of mature locusts or travelling from such tracks.

On the appearance of young locusts, Collectors are authorized to hire gangs of fifty or one hundred men each under famine, police, or other intelligent officers for the purpose of using every means that may suggest themselves for the destruction of young locusts. The energetic efforts of Mr. J. H. Cook in this direction are commendable.

4. It is suggested that a cheaper and more wholesale way of destruction than that of attempting to burn them may be to dig deep trenches and to drive the young locusts into them, beat them down and bury them. Famine labor may perhaps be available for the purpose. But the Board would leave to Collectors a liberal discretion as to the means they may employ and the number of gangs they may sanction, the general object in view being by means of such gangs to indicate to the people the most practical way of dealing with the locusts and organizing the assistance of the people, for such gangs can never be entertained by Government in sufficient numbers to clear the whole country; the people must be stimulated to help themselves.

5. Collectors should report on the best means of engaging the co-operation of the people, specially of those who have nothing left to lose. Those whose fields are in advance of the locusts may be expected to exert themselves for their own protection. The Board trust to Collectors using the discretion given them carefully so as not to lead to thoughtless expenditure. They desire a fortnightly report of expenditure, results and prospects.

6. The Board see no use in deputing Mr. Robertson to visit the Oodumulpetta Taluq at present.

(True Copies and Extract.)

(Signed) C. A. GALTON,
Acting Secretary.

ORDER THEREON, 20th June 1878, No. 937.

No. 247.

Miscellaneous.

THE Board's instructions are approved and the expenditure involved is sanctioned.

2. Some papers relating to the methods adopted for the destruction of locusts in the Punjab will shortly be communicated to the Board. The plan found to be most effective was similar to that suggested in paragraph 4 of the foregoing Proceedings, and it is stated that "when they are not above a week old a trench of 6 or 8 inches wide and deep, such as two men may form in a few minutes

suffices for securing the insects which jump into it with alacrity and appear wholly unable to extricate themselves from it."

3. The utmost vigilance will be necessary, and this should be impressed on the people in their own interest, as well as on the village and taluq officials.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) C. G. MASTER,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
„ the Accountant-General.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

937
3

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

No. 2567

937/4

From *Board of Revenue*

Dated *5 June*

1878

FOR ORDERS.

*Two rats
the order of the
the a direct
great-visitance
1916 M
The reaction is
to the opportunity of
destroying the young
before they could fly*

1916

Cost. of (1878) *3000000*

REVENUE.

THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

Ac., Ac., Ec.

Dated June 20th.

Recd.

G.O., 20th June 1878, No. 937.

Encl.

JUNE.

No. 216217.

Young Lucule.—Approving with remarks
the Board's instructions to all Collectors for the
destruction of —, and sanctioning the expendi-
ture involved.



Ischem lost.

The English plan of
driving them into Chabon...
hinders & then burying
them in midwinter the
only one that promises
success. The eggs are often
deposited in places
beyond means of ploughing
in September. 1875

the board's instructions to all Collectors for the
destruction of —, and sanctioning the expendi-
ture involved.



937
5

No. 2567
FOR ORDERS.

No. 1,497.
PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 5th June 1878.

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2. The ryots made no endeavors to destroy them at first, and now that they are about twenty days old, their destruction is more difficult. I have tried to explain to the ryot the methods of destruction alluded to in the extract from the Annual Report (1874) of the Commissioner of Agriculture for the United States published in Board's Proceedings of 17th April 1878, No. 1,060, and have advised them to set all the small boys in their villages to work. In one place (under a tank bund) I came across vast numbers collected in a small space of brushwood and short grass. I sent out the Revenue Inspector next morning to collect the villagers and destroy the locusts by fire, and catching them in cloths if he found the brushwood would not burn. I have not yet heard whether he was successful. I have also requested Mr. Cook, the Special Assistant Collector, to proceed to the southern part of the taluq and collect the villagers for the purpose of exterminating these insects.

3. The damage done by them is very considerable. I have seen many garden fields of young cholum in which the plants were entirely destroyed. As soon as they are able to move, the young locusts commence to migrate and appear like a number of small frogs jumping. The general direction of their migration seems to be north-east.

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* This is a small outturn—One Pothy=192 pucca measures. Taking the produce of one bullah to be five *Pothies, and each pothy to be worth Rupees 30 (the present rate), we have a total of 1,65,000 Rupees destroyed in only three villages. This is for grain alone. The stalks of the cholam grain now are calculated to feed the cattle for a year—but it is all gone—so, what will the cattle do, as the grass is also eaten. About a month ago, when I was down in this part, I saw the cholam springing up in all directions and I was in hopes the ryots were going to have a bumper crop, but now there is really not a blade to be seen, and the few gardens where the cholam is still flourishing and would be ripe soon is now thick with locusts. In another week the whole of the southern part of the taluq will be almost denuded of crops. I am not, I think, exaggerating as I speak from personal observation. The locusts are getting very large and beginning to fly a little. If when they are full size they betake themselves to pastures new by going to the north part of the taluq and commit the same havoc there as they have done here, this taluq will be utterly ruined, and we will have a bigger famine than last year. The ryots fear that the locusts will fly over the taluq as they appear to be all coming from the hills which they have pretty well spoiled. I do not wish to be thought an alarmist, but I really think the locust plague is a very serious matter and will require careful watching. I am doing my best to assist the ryots, and they are also trying their utmost to get rid of the locusts. Let us hope they will. I have received instructions from the local Committee to begin the distribution of Mansion money at once for seed-grain, but do not you think it useless in this part of the taluq where the seed, if sown and springing up, would surely be eaten by the locusts. Most that have seed-grain are afraid to attempt a fourth time. I shall be constantly on the move from village to village and will keep you informed of the progress of this plague, for such we may call it.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) A. McC. WEBSTER,
Collector.

SUBMITTED for the information and orders of Government.

2. In the Board's view the matter is very serious and one in which the avoidance of delay is of grave importance. Every day strengthens the young locusts, increases their voracity and, what is worse, strengthens their powers of locomotion, and thus enhances the difficulty of dealing with them, till, on attaining their wings, they are beyond control and will spread themselves over a far wider area than they have yet visited. If the weather continue dry and favorable to the hatching of ova and maturing

of larvae the plague may well become in localities a worse evil to the Government, the people, and the cattle than even the famine which has been experienced. In view of such a possibility, not to say probability, and in view of the importance of not losing time, the Board have taken the responsibility of issuing the following instructions without awaiting the previous sanction of Government, in the hope that they may have the approval of Government till such time as the Government itself may issue other orders, or further experience indicates the advisability of any amendment thereof.

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6. The Board see no use in deputing Mr. Robertson to visit the Oodumulpetta Taluq at present.

(True Copies and Extract.)

Acting Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department,
" all Collectors.

Copy to the Superintendent of Government Farms.
" to the Superintendent of Government Museum.
" to J. Shortt, Esq., M.P.

Exd. W. H. French.

Board of Agriculture,
MADRAS.

PROCEEDINGS, 5TH JUNE 1878, No. 1,497.

Sept 12. 1898

Book

Received

Dec 20. 1878

JUN 2 1964

No. 1,497.

Appearance of young Locusts in Odumpehla Taluk, Caintatore District.—Submitting to Government letters from Collector reporting on the —; issuing instructions to all Collectors for the destruction of the insects; and calling for a fortnightly report of expenditure, results and prospects.

18937

The Board's instructions are
The Corporation's
appointed ~~representatives~~ ^{representatives} ~~and~~ ^{instructed}
to be conducted.

2. The papers relating to the
contract adopted for the distribution
of funds in the Punjab will
show the communication to the
Board. No plan should be
most effective was similar to that
adopted in para 4 of the paper
preceding. It is stated that
"when they are not above a week
old a head of 8 inches wide &
deep back as low as a man's
"shoulder the insect is driven for
into it by the head and appears
"usually unable to extricate himself
The nearest assistance will be necessary
if this should be interpreted as the people
in them are not to be used as
much as the others.