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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

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Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
30th April 1877.

Famine Relief.

No. 741. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 17th April 1877, No. 1,713:—

Read the following letter from C. W. W. MARTIN, Esq., Acting Sub-Collector of Madura, to W. McQUHAE, Esq., Collector of Madura, dated Dindigul 29th March 1877

I HAVE the honor to inform you that I have just returned from a tour in the Pulni Taluq. Going out I went by Kallimandaiyam, Appipalayam, Koothempoondy and Thoppamputti down to Pulni. At Kallimandaiyam and Koothempoondy from the appearance of the people attending the relief-houses, it was evident that the houses, recently opened there, were not opened at all too soon. The great majority of the applicants for relief were young children, of whom some had lost or been deserted by their parents and others had parents incapable of maintaining them. The rest of the applicants for relief were all infirm destitute persons, and the inquiries which have been made regarding them have shown that they were all fitting subjects for relief.

2. While in your company at Pulni I sent orders for the village inspection, and at the same time tried to hasten the completion of the relief camp at Pulni. The latest reports that I have received show that there are 101 resident paupers at Pulni, besides more than 100 others fed outside the camp.

3. As the result of the village inspection a large number of persons are ready in the villages to be sent to Pulni camp, and a large number of persons are also collected at the three relief-houses above mentioned. I have directed the Tahsildar of Pulni to complete sheds to accommodate 1,000 persons at the Pulni camp as quickly as possible.

4. I regret to say that the rain which fell on the 16th and 17th March (registered at 2 inches in the Pulni gauge) has not been general as I thought. It did not extend to the north part of the Pulni Taluq, but was confined altogether to the tract about 10 miles north from the Pulni Hills; it was a little less than ½ inch at Dindigul and has not even made the country green. The only relief it will give to the country will be a slight addition to the water in the wells in those villages which it reached.

5. Shortly after your departure from Pulni, Mr. Baber, deputed on special duty, joined me at Pulni. We immediately proceeded to visit every work together, and to put into effect upon them the rules of task-work. We tested the soils in each tank by using the pick and mamooty ourselves, and classed the soils in different parts of the tanks under one or other of the heads given in the task-tables, which I forwarded to you with my letter, No 367, dated 25th March 1877.

6. These tasks will remain in force pending any modifications you may think fit to make in the tables.

7. Mr. Baber will constantly visit these tanks and test the correctness of our classification of soil, raising or lowering the tasks as they appear too light or too heavy. After visiting all the tanks, we went to Kallimandaiyam on the Uppiliaputti to Dharampuram road and were present at the payment of 2,400 persons by Mr. Jackson, and had in this way an excellent opportunity of inspecting the gangs and the condition of the people. These people have, in consequence of the scarcity of cholum in the Kallimandaiyam market, been paid at the commutation rates of second-sort rice, giving 1 Anna and 11 Pies for men and 1 Anna and 5 Pies for women.

8. Their task, though regular, has been light because of the practice of allowing two women carriers to each man digger in every kind of soil. When the soil was hard to dig and but little was required from the man the two women had very little to do. They had only now and then therefore up to a fair ordinary task. The wages accordingly at the commutation rates of second-sort rice have been amply sufficient to keep them in sound health. The introduction of the new tables of task-work will probably have the effect of eliminating from this road, as also from the Vedasandur to Uppiliaputti road, any women who are not proper subjects for relief. The condition of the laborers on the tank works I have first spoken of was not so good, and I had to draw the attention of the Superintendent of works to several cases which will have to be dealt with under the special

orders of the Government, either by removal to relief camps or by allotment of lighter task. These, however, were not many, and I am of opinion that where there are no other causes inducing ill-health, Government Scale No. I gives an amply sufficient wage to keep people in health.

9. As the earthwork on the Komaralingam road was just completed, and as I understood that Venkatasamy Naik and Mowngooroosamy Naick wished to be relieved of the charge of the road, I took advantage of the arrival of Sergeant Kerr of the Bengal Public Works Department and placed him in charge. I have also placed the general supervision of the works in the western part of the taluq under Sergeant Kerr, the Tahsildar will take the centre, and Mr. Jackson the east of the taluq. Mr. Baber will pay particular attention to the village inspection, the camps at Pulni and at the outlying relief-houses, and gratuitous relief in general, besides visiting the works from time to time and seeing that the rules are properly understood and enforced; while the Tahsildar is most busily engaged in the Jamabundy, Mr. Kerr and Mr. Jackson will divide the centre of the taluq between them. I am happy to think that with the supervision now in the taluq the safety of all persons from starvation is assured.

10. With regard to the question of payments on works, I have the honor to forward a request* from Mr. Jackson that he may be allowed to continue the system on which he has been working instead of making daily payments through gangsmen. Mr. Jackson has the interest of the people very much at heart and has succeeded in creating an excellent market at Kalliman-daiyam for the people on their weekly pay day. The people have fallen into the system and like it because they get more grain by buying a larger quantity; on the other works I have directed daily payments or as often as is possible.

* *Vide* his letter enclosed.

11. I parted from Mr. Baber at Uppiliaputti and returned to Dindigul to carry out what work was necessary in that taluq. I find that the relief camp at Dindigul is nearly complete, but on too small a scale. It will do, however, for a beginning. The village inspection is being rapidly carried out, and we will know in a few days the numbers for whom we require accommodation. If they are likely largely to exceed the numbers the present camp can accommodate, I have got materials on hand to open a larger camp at a short notice.

12. Works have now been opened in the east and east centre of the Dindigul Taluq, and I have proposed to open the Vedasendur to Gudalur road when sanctioned by Government for the benefit of the northern villages in which distress is beginning again to develope itself.

13. I regret that I cannot make this report more full as I have had a very severe attack of illness since my return to Dindigul. I fear, also, that I shall not be able to inspect the works in the Dindigul Taluq for the same reason for some time to come.

No. 205.

FORWARDED to the Board of Revenue for information. Mr. Jackson has been allowed to continue weekly payments to coolies so long as the laborers prefer that system.

MADAMADURA,
4th April 1877.

(Signed) W. McQUHAE,
Collector.

ENCLOSURE No. 1—Copy of Mr. Jackson's letter.

SUBMITTED for the information of Government.

2. The Board see no objection to weekly payments being continued when the people desire it. They regret to learn the serious nature of Mr. Martin's illness.

3. It is observed that the coolies in Palni are being paid on Scale I of the Government Order. The Board presume that the Collector has satisfied himself that the tasks prescribed and executed are such as to entitle them to the higher rates.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) H. E. STOKES,
Secretary.

No. 742. ORDER THEREON, 30th April 1877, No. 1,600 S.

Miscellaneous. RECORDED.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Board of Revenue.
" the Financial Department.

Exd. L. F. Zepher.

Rev Dep.t

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue
Dated 17th April 1877.

Read the following

Board's S.R.No 3692/77

No 390

From C. W. H. Martin Esquire
Actg. Sub Collector
Madura.

To W. Mc Pherson Esquire
Collector of
Madura.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that I have just returned from a tour in the Palni Taluq. Going out I went by Kullimandai-yam, Appalayam, Koo Nimpoondi and Thoppampatty down to Palni. At Kullimandai-yam and Koo Nimpoondi from the appearance of the people attending the relief Works, it was evident that the Famine results spread here as well as in other parts. The majority of the applicants for relief were young children of whom some had lost or been deserted by their parents, and others had parents incapable of maintaining them. The rest of the applicants for relief were all infirm destitute persons and the Enquiries which have been made regarding them have shown that they were all fitting Subjects for relief.

2. While on your tour at Palni I sent orders for the Village inspection and at the same time tried to hasten the Completion of the relief Camp at Palni. The latest reports that I have received show that there are 101 resident persons at Palni besides more than 100 Persons fed outside the Camp.

3. As

3. As the result of the relief inspection a large number of persons are ready in the Palnis to be sent to Pulni Camp and a large number of persons are also collected at the three relief houses above mentioned. I have directed the Tahsildar of Pulni to complete sheds to accommodate 1000 persons at the Pulni Camp as quickly as possible.

4. I regret to say that the rain which fell on the 16th & 17th March (registered at 2 inches in the Pulni Gauge) has not been general as I hoped it did not extend to the north part of the Pulni Taluq but was confined almost entirely to the tract about 10 miles north from the Pulni Hills; it was a little less than ½ inch at Dindigul and has not been made the Country green. The only relief it will give to the Country will be a slight addition to the water in the wells in most places which it reached.

5. Shortly after your departure from Pulni Mr Baber deputed on Special duty joined me at Pulni. We immediately proceeded to visit every work together and to put into effect upon them the rules of Task work. We tested the soils in each tank by using the pick and manually ourselves and classed the soils in different parts of the tanks under one or other of the heads given in the task tables which I forwarded to you with my letter No 367 dated 2nd March 1877.

6. These tasks will remain in force pending any modifications you may think fit to make in the tables.

7. Mr Baber will constantly visit these tanks and test the correctness of the classification of soil raising or lowering the tasks as they appear too light or too heavy. After visiting all the tanks we went to Kullimandayam on the Appiliaputtu to Dharapuram road and were present at the payment of 2400 persons by Mr Jackson and had an excellent opportunity of inspecting the people and the condition of the people. These people have in consequence of the scarcity of Cholam in the Kullimandayam market been paid at the Commutation rates of 2d. and 1½d. per viss Gingelly oil and 1 anna and 1 anna and five pice for women.

8. Their task work has been light because of the practice of allowing women carrying to task differ in every kind of soil. When the soil was hard to dig and but little was required from the men the 2 women had very little to do. They had only one man and thus were put up to a fair ordinary task. We were accordingly at the Commutation rates of 2d. & 1½d. per viss have been ample sufficient to keep them in sound health. The introduction of the new tables of task work will probably have the effect of eliminating from this road as also from the Palasamudram to Appiliaputtu road any women who are not proper subjects for relief. The condition of the labourers on the tank works I have first spoken of was not so good and I had to draw the attention of the Superintendent of works to several cases which will have to be dealt with under the Special orders of the Government either

bg.

by removal to relief camps or by allotment of lighter task. These however were not many and I am of opinion that where there are no other causes in during ill. health (Cost. Scale No 1) gives an ample sufficient wage to keep people in health.

9. As the earth work on the Kumaralingam road was first completed and as I understood that Kuttakatanny Naick wished to be relieved of the charge of the road, I took advantage of the arrival of Serjeant Kerr of the Bustal D.P.W. and placed him in charge. I have also placed the general supervision of the works in the western part of the Jaffna under Serjeant Kerr, the Tahsildar will take the centre and Mr. Jackson the East of the Jaffna. Mr. Baber will pay particular attention to the village inspection, the Camps at Palmi and at the outlying relief houses and Fratuitous relief in general besides visiting the works from time to time and seeing that the rules are properly understood and enforced: while the Subaltern is most busily employed in the

Jaffna

[1] Vide his letter enclosed

Jaffna 6th Nov and Mr. Jackson will divide the duties of the Jaffna between them. I am happy to think that with the supervision now in the Jaffna the safety of all persons from starvation is assured.

10. With regard to the question of payments on works I have the honor to forward a request from Mr. Jackson that he may be allowed to continue the system on which he has been working instead of making daily payments through Conductors. Mr. Jackson has the interest of the people very much at heart and has succeeded in creating an excellent market at Kuttaiandy and for the people on their weekly pay day. The people have fallen into the system and like it because they get more grain by buying a larger quantity on the other weeks. I have directed daily payments as often as is possible.

11. I parted from Mr. Baber at Jaffna and returned to Dindigul by the same route. I found that the Relief Camp at Dindigul is nearly Complete but no Sonnakal Scale

Jaffna

it will do however for a beginning. The village inspection is being rapidly carried out and we will know in a few days the number for whom we require accommodation. If they are likely largely to exceed the numbers the present Camps can accommodate, I have got materials on hand to open a larger Camp at a short notice.

12. Works have now been opened in the east and east centre of the Dindigul Taluq, and I have proposed to open the Vedasandur to Sedalur road when sanctioned by Government for the benefit of the northern villages in which distress is beginning again to develope itself.

I regret that I cannot make this report more full as I have had a very severe attack of illness since my return to Dindigul. I fear also that I shall not be able to inspect the works in the Dindigul Taluq for the same reason for some time to come.

Madura Sub Collr's Office
Camp, Dindigul 29th March 1877

I have &c
S. K. W. Martin
Asst Sub Collector.

No. 205. Forwarded to the Board of Revenue for information. W. Jackson has been allowed to continue weekly payments to coolies so long as the labourers prefer that system.

Camp, Bowanandaram
4th April 1877

S. K. Mc Guire
Collector

Enclosure.

To S. K. W. Martin Esquire
Asst Collector
Dindigul

Sir,

In submitting abstracts and Audit Report for payments of the 25th Instant, it will be noticed the decrease in expenditure on account of clearance in wages. Besides a good number of men were absent during current week, which gave a large number of women and children &c. I think in compliance with orders adopt the new tasks &c from 1st April 1877.

I have to request on behalf of the labourers, as well as to avoid much final delay and confusion that weekly payments, which has from the first of the operations been worked with such satisfactory results at the same spot and their market day, at the same hour, they can proceed for 12 annas or 8 annas or 6 annas the grain at a whole sale rate and sell it with 2 annas or 3, 4 or 1 anna they would have to buy from those who bought at a cheaper rate and even then not sure of certain. To change paying weekly to fortnightly or daily for my force will be a great loss to the poor people there the reduction of wages. Besides their pittances passing through so many hands and men who are not

not trustworthy it is not possible that the full pay could cross into the hand of the poor coolies.

In place of my going to Dindigul on the 12th or 13th of each month on account of my Pension I respectfully request leave to be in Dindigul Early on the 9th April; there are some family affairs on that date which I am anxious to be present at.

I am Sir
Your most obedient Servant
S. H. Jackson Supt
Imperial P.W.

Kullimandiem
26.3.77

1st Asst Supt
S. H. Jackson Esqr.
Dy Collector

Submitted for the information of Government.

2. The Board see no objection to weekly payments being continued when the people desire it. They regret to learn the serious nature of Mr Martin's illness

3. It is observed that the coolies in Palni are being paid on scale I of the S.O. The Board presume that the Collector has satisfied himself that the tasks prescribed are suited to the different rates.

I am Sir
Your most obedient Servant
J. Graham
Secretary.

To The Additional Secretary to Govt. R.D.

Rev. 1877 Dept
Fo. 2633.

Rev. & Ins. Bd. of Rev
Dated 17th April 1877
Recd 18th

No 1600 J

30 April 1877

Submitting for the information of Govt. Madura Collr's letter forwarding the Asst. Sub-Collr's report on his tour of inspection of Pulni Taluq.

Govt Copy to Chief Sec. to Govt. Rev. Dept
Board's Proc. 19 May 1877
No. 1600 J

C21-4-) R20-4-)