

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Financial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	61	Press
		<u>Mis.</u>
Dated	14. 2.	1868.

B. No. 8-9

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Not to be folded or roughly handledP
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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Financial Department,
for the month of February 1860.*

No. 8. Read the following letter from Major CHARLES A. ORR, Mint Master; to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated 4th February 1860, No. 365.

Paragraph 1st. As required by Government in its orders of the 10th ultimo, No. 13, communicating, for any remarks I may have to offer, a letter addressed to the Financial Secretary to the Government of India by the late Assay Master of the Calcutta Mint, detailing the beneficial effects on the operations of that Mint of the system he had there introduced of taking musters of Bullion for assay "by granulating a small portion of each melting pot," and suggesting the adoption of the same course in the other Indian Mints, I have the honor to state that the process has long been understood at this Mint, but has not been carried beyond experiment, in consequence, probably, either of a disinclination to impose upon the weak Melting Department additional risk and responsibility, or of its having been considered unnecessary to make any innovation while the existing system practically gives results which it is believed could not be excelled by any other.

2nd. It would appear that the mode of taking musters at this Mint differs somewhat from that formerly followed at Calcutta, and is conducted with more care, for instead of "cutting a small wedge-shaped piece from one of the edges of the Ingot, so that only the very outer part is assayed," the practice here is to remove the tops and bottoms and to take a piece of metal from the centre after clearing away the oxidated surface; and in the case of merchants or private bars, the outer surfaces, at places, at the top and bottom being cleared away, a piece of clean metal is cut from each.

3rd. This system, where Bullion is manipulated in small masses as at this Mint, seems to me preferable to that advocated by Mr. Boycott, because, while it has been found to work successfully, it affords, what is most necessary for the Mint Master, an indication of the degree of attention that has been paid to the melting, and brings to notice whether any of the variations which are apt to take place in the fineness of the metal at different parts of Ingots, and which in extreme cases may amount to as much as two dwts. or sufficient to condemn the Ingots for coinage, have occurred and to what extent. Taking granules from the pot may more uniformly give correct samples of the average fineness of the contents, if the metal be properly melted and stirred, but it can scarcely prove a check upon these operations, or discover whether that of pouring has been negligently performed.

4th. That the mode of taking musters practised here is practically, as regards the results, as correct as that proposed

Years.	Calcutta	Difference in assay-grains.		Madras.	Difference in assay-grains.		Bombay	Difference in assay-grains.	
		Above. Std.	Below. Std.		Above. Std.	Below. Std.		Above. Std.	Below. Std.
1852	918-6700	11.5	..	917-9300	7.2	..	917-0700	2.3	..
1853	917-7000	5.9	..	917-1300	2.6	..	917-9100	7.1	..
1854	917-8350	6.7	..	916-8100	0.8	..	918-6620	11.4	..
1855	916-7570	0.5	..	918-1580	8.5	..	915-7200	0.0	5.5
1856	916-5284	0.0	0.8	916-1725	0.0	2.0	918-2425	9.0	..
1857	916-7631	0.5	..	916-9496	1.6	..	916-3208	0.0	2.0
1858	917-1750	2.9	..	916-8610	1.1	..	918-7020	11.7	..
Average.	917-3469	3.9	..	917-1444	2.7	..	917-5181	4.9	..

to be substituted is shown, I think, by the Home Pyx Reports entered in the margin, and that the assays there given of the coins of this Mint should be so favorable, or contrast so well with those struck at Calcutta, even since the alteration made there by

Mr. Boycott, is a proof, I believe, of there being nothing very defective, or untrustworthy in our system of valuing Bullion or of testing the quality of Ingots for coinage.

5th. Supported in this belief by the opinion of the experienced Assay Master of this Mint whom I have consulted, and to whose province the question would appear more strictly to belong, I am unable to perceive that a change is necessary, and, looking at the weakness of our establishments, I would not recommend the adoption of Mr. Boycott's suggestion, unless Government is prepared to strengthen the Melting Department of this Mint in a corresponding degree with the greater labor and risk the process of taking musters by granulation must necessarily entail upon the Melter and his Assistants.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Financial Department,
for the month of February 1860.

No. 9. To the Secretary to the Government of India, Financial Department, dated Fort St. George, 14th February 1860, No. 61.

The Extract from the Proceedings of the Government of India, in the Financial Department, dated the 22nd December last, having as therein desired been referred to the Mint Master for his consideration and remarks, I am now directed to transmit to you a copy of that officer's report, from which it will be seen that the process advocated by Dr. Boycott has long been understood at the Madras Mint, but has not been carried beyond experiment, in consequence either of a disinclination to impose upon the weak Melting Department additional risk and responsibility, or of its having been considered unnecessary to make any innovation while the existing system practically gives results which, it is believed, could not be excelled by any other. Major Orr therefore does not think, nor does Dr. Shaw the Assay Master whom he has consulted and to whose province the question would seem more strictly to belong, that a change is necessary in the system adopted here of valuing Bullion or of testing the quality of Ingots for coinage, and looking at the weakness of the present establishments, he would not recommend the adoption of Dr. Boycott's suggestion.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Dep. 20

Financial Depart.

No 61-

The Secretary to the Govt of India
Financial Depart

Sir,

The Extract from the Proceedings of the Govt of India in the Financial Dept dated the 22^d Decem^r as therein desired has been referred to the Mint Master for his consideration and remarks, I am now directed to transmit to you a copy of that Officer's report, from which it will be seen that the process advocated by Dr. Boycott has long been understood at the Madras Mint, but has not been carried beyond experiment, in consequence either of a disinclination to impose upon the weak Melting Department additional

Dated 4th Feb 1860. No 365.

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Suggestion.

JFO

Fort St. George
14 February 1866

no does Dr. Shaw the
Assay Master whom he
has consulted and
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question would
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Now master's letter to follow
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