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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.**Government of Madras.***Public Works* **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 381

Press
Mis.

165-166

Dated

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1869.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
5th February 1869.*

No. 165. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Revenue Department, dated 18th January 1869, No. 143 :—

Read the following Despatch from the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India, (Revenue,) to His Excellency the Right Honorable the Governor in Council, Fort St. George, dated India Office, London, 9th July 1868, No. 31.

1. I have considered in Council the Despatch from your Excellency in Council, numbered 27, and dated the 12th May, forwarding, in continuation of your Despatch No. 18, of the 22nd of April, a copy of reports on the condition of the Districts of North Arcot, Bellary, Cuddapah, Salem, and Nellore, and of the Orders which you have issued in consequence.

2. I regret to learn that the condition of parts of the Districts of Salem, Nellore, and Cuddapah, and especially the last named, is still such as to afford ground for apprehensions of considerable distress. I approve the measures sanctioned by your Excellency in Council for making provision for the relief of the population. The deputation of Mr. Clarke also to the districts was judicious, and I shall await with anxiety his report of them.

3. The Minute of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief contains a suggestion for entrusting the minor irrigation works throughout the Presidency to a Department, the Officers of which should attend solely to the wants of the several Collectorates in this respect. This seems to me to be hardly necessary to so great an extent as His Excellency proposes, and the object would, in my opinion, be fully attained if the plan which I recommended in my Despatch of the 19th of March, No. 15, paragraph 4, was adopted, and all minor works of irrigation were entrusted to the Revenue Officers of the districts, with such additions to their establishments as may be found necessary. I have not yet learned that any steps have been taken to accomplish this object. But I think it advisable that you should at once place yourselves in communication with the Government of India upon it, as one of the most effectual means of permanently relieving many of the Collectorates of your Presidency from the frequent recurrence of seasons of distress, and the mitigation of them if they should be unhappily unavoidable.

4. I am glad to learn that the apprehensions of distress in Bellary have been removed.

Irrigation, No. 9.

In paragraph 3 of the foregoing Despatch, the Secretary of State draws attention to a suggestion made by him in a previous Despatch, that the execution of all minor works of irrigation, as well as of all minor roads, should be entrusted to the Revenue Officers of Districts, with such additions to their establishments as may be found necessary.

2. The alleged deterioration of the minor irrigation works in many, if not in most, of the Districts of this Presidency, has long been a source of complaint on the part of the Revenue authorities, and a cause of serious anxiety to the Government. Two reasons for this deterioration have been assigned :—

1st.—The insufficiency of the annual grants for agricultural repairs.

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2nd.—The inadequacy of the comparatively limited staff at the disposal of the Public Works Department to maintain the numerous works, scattered over the several districts, in an efficient state of repair.

3. It has also been alleged that the enforcement of the liability of the ryots to perform customary labour on irrigation works has been a matter of increasing difficulty of late years, and that the unsatisfactory state of many of the tanks and channels is in a great measure attributable to this cause.

4. The question of the agency by which the minor irrigation works should be kept in repair, is essentially connected with the larger question of the organization of the Department of Public Works, in regard to which the Government, so far back as the 7th November 1867, called for the opinions of the Board of Revenue and of certain selected Revenue Officers whom the Board were instructed to consult, and also of four of the Superintending Engineers. The answers of the four Officers last mentioned were received many months ago, but the Government have not yet been furnished with those of the Revenue authorities. It is understood that the replies of the Collectors have been received by the Board, and that the subject is now under the Board's consideration.

5. The Government have also, during the past year, been in communication with the Board on the subject of providing the additional funds required for keeping the irrigation works in repair by instituting an irrigation cess in commutation of the liability to perform customary labour. In their Proceedings of the 20th May last, reviewing certain proposals made by the Director of Revenue Settlement for the revision of the Land Assessment of the Salem District, the Government expressed themselves in favour of the institution of such a cess, and instructed the Board, after consultation with the Director of Revenue Settlement and with the several Collectors, to prepare a draft Act to legalize it. This subject also is still under the consideration of the Board. It is one on which, His Excellency is aware, considerable difference of opinion prevails among the District Officers, and which requires to be very carefully considered in all its bearings.

6. The three questions of (1) the Agency by which minor irrigation repairs should be carried out; (2) the organization of the Department of Public Works; and (3) the source from which the requisite money or labour is to be provided being thus under consideration, and the first two questions being closely connected with each other, His Excellency in Council deems it advisable, with a view to arriving at a speedy and, at the same time, satisfactory settlement of these important questions, to appoint a mixed Commission, composed of the Members of the Board of Revenue; the Honorable V. Ramiengar, Superintendent of Stamps; Mr. R. K. Puckle, Collector of Tinnevely; Colonel Anderson, Chief Engineer for Irrigation; and Major Shaw Stewart, Consulting Engineer for Railways, to investigate and report on them. It will be the duty of the Commission to examine all the correspondence which has recently taken place regarding the working of the Public Works Department under its present organization, and the state of the irrigation works, and to take the evidence of any Officers of the Revenue and Public Works Departments, who are likely to be able to furnish useful information, and whose attendance can be readily obtained. The question of the maintenance of the

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District Roads of the Presidency will also be particularly considered by the Commission in connection with that of the executive agency to which the repair of minor irrigation works may be entrusted.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) R. A. DALYELL,
Acting Secretary to Government.

No. 166.

ORDER THEREON, 5th February 1869, No. 331.

IRRIGATION, No. 6.

Communicated to the Superintending Engineers.

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

To Superintending Engineers.
To the Controller of Public Works Accounts.
To Captain R. B. Kennedy.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

Gort. of 1869 Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

To
THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEERS

&c. &c. &c.

Dated February, 1869.

Recd.

G. O., 5th February 1869, No. 181.

FEBRUARY.

Nos. 165-166

Minor Works of Irrigation.—Proceedings Revenue Department, passing orders on the Despatch from the Home Government on the subject of entrusting minor works of irrigation to the Revenue Officers; communicated to the Officers concerned.

27/1869
Gort. of 1869 Madras.

REVENUE.

To

THE BOARD OF REVENUE,

&c. &c. &c.

Dated January, 1869.

Recd. 20th

Encl. 0

G. O., 18th January 1869, No. 113.

JANUARY.

Nos. 237-243.

No 381-5-February/69

Minor Irrigation Works.—Passing orders on the Despatch from Home Government on the subject of entrusting their execution to the Revenue Officers of Districts

With an order,

10/10

381

No 381

Communicated to the Subg
Engineers.

Recd S. J. J. J.
5th Feb 2/69

W. B.

130 The Subg Engineer
4. Controller
4. Capt A B Kennedy

148

Recd 6/2/69

1879/97

Cue 214

Court of 1869, Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

The Superintending Engineer

Dated

Recd

5 Feb 1880 No 381

Nos. 165-166

Offr concerned

Income Works of Irrigation
From the said papers and
on the despatch from the
Honble on the subject
of introducing Income Works
of Irrigation to the Revenue
Dept Officers - and the