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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public works **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 133-143	69	Press Mis.
Dated	9- 1-	1873.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department, 9 h January 1873.

No. 133. Read the following Proceedings of the Government of India in the Public Works Department, (Irrigation,) dated Simla, 26th September 1872, No. 835-I:—

Irrigation on northern or left bank of Pennair, Nellore District, Sungum Project.

Read the following despatch from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India, (Public Works,) to His Excellency the Right Honourable the Governor-General of India in Council, dated India Office, London, 31st July 1872, No. 71.

I HAVE considered in Council the letter from your Government, dated the 22nd of April last, No. 53, submitting for approval a scheme proposed by the Government of Madras, for bestowing on the northern bank of the River Pennair, in Nellore, similar benefits to those which have been conferred on the southern portion of the delta by a carefully devised system of irrigation.

2. The project embraces the construction of a weir at Sungum, and of a large canal from the left bank of the river to fill the Kanigivi and Durur reservoirs, which will be enlarged, as well as channels from the former of these works to fill such of the minor tanks in the district as it is decided to retain.

3. It is reckoned that the scheme, which it will take five years to complete, will bring under irrigation 94,000 acres, instead of only 44,053 as at present, and the net returns are variously estimated at from 7·88 to 8·41 on the total outlay of capital.

4. As the matter is stated in your letter, the prospects of advantage from the project might warrant the ready approval of Her Majesty's Government; but there are various points on which I desire to have further information before giving my sanction to the execution of the work.

5. In the first place the estimates do not appear to include the preliminary expenditure, nor has allowance been made for the accumulation of interest during the five years that the works are expected to be under construction, and the returns of revenue have apparently been calculated as if the whole irrigable area would at once become fully profitable on the opening of the canals. It is, moreover, questionable to what extent credit should be taken for receipts from the cultivation of waste land and the sale of the beds of abandoned tanks, until time has shown whether greater advantage may not accrue from utilising any of them as reservoirs for irrigation. On the other hand, it seems intended to allow the holders of Inam lands to irrigate their fields without any charge, although not more than three-fourths of their area has been hitherto cultivated at all, and the owners will, in all cases, gain the great advantage of freedom from apprehension of drought.

6. There is, however, a further consideration which especially leads me to pause in the matter, namely, the relations of the Government with the Madras Irrigation Company. By the terms of their original contract they are empowered to construct, under the name of the "Toombuddra Project," a system of works described in a memorandum drawn up by Sir Arthur Cotton in 1858, which contemplates, among other things, the formation of a canal through Southern Nellore, to be fed in part by water from the Pennair, taken off at Someswarum, or

some other point necessarily above Sungum. By Clause 5 of their contract they are required, in planning and executing these works, to have "due regard" to "*existing* rights of irrigation," and to "*existing* interests," and also to abstain from interference with "*prospective* irrigation from channels in connexion with the Nellore Anicut, already constructed by the Madras Government." But no similar obligation is imposed with reference to prospective irrigation from channels in connexion with any works not already constructed. It becomes a question therefore, and a very serious one, whether, in the event of the Company being hereafter in a position to construct their projected works in Southern Nellore, they will not have the first claim upon all the water of the Pennair at their point of junction with that river, over and above the quantity required for the "existing rights" and "interests" and "prospective irrigation" specially referred to and reserved in Clause 5, and will not consequently be entitled, if they think fit to intercept the water reckoned upon for the supply of the works proposed by the Madras Government for the irrigation of Northern Nellore. Whether a construction so much opposed to the interests of the public must necessarily be placed on the terms of the Company's contract may perhaps be a question depending greatly on local custom and local interpretation of irrigational rights. It is one, therefore, that may be most fittingly decided by your Excellency's Government, and by that of Madras, by whom I am anxious that this, as well as the other points to which I have alluded, should be carefully considered before any further action is taken upon the project under review.

7. I shall also be glad to be informed of the circumstances connected with the application referred to in the 102nd paragraph of Mr. Smith's report of the 30th October 1869, as it is obvious that the area to which the Government have to look for early profits from the scheme of irrigation may have been considerably reduced, if land has been granted in the manner therein suggested."

ORDER.—Ordered that the above Despatch be forwarded to the Government of Madras in the Public Works Department, Irrigation Branch, in continuation of letter No. 330-I of the 22nd April last, for a complete report on all the points noted in the despatch.

(Signed) G. T. SKIPWITH, Captain, R.E.,
For *Dy. Secy. to the Government of India.*

No. 134. ORDER THEREON, 9th January 1873, No. 69.

IRRIGATION, No. 15.

IN despatch No. 71, dated 31st July 1871, from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India, regarding the Sungum Project for improving the irrigation on northern or left bank of Pennair river, Nellore District, the following passage occurs :—

"It seems intended to allow the holders of Inam lands to irrigate their fields without any charge, although not more than three-fourths of their area has

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department, 9th January 1873.

been hitherto cultivated at all, and the owners will, in all cases, gain the great advantage of freedom from apprehension of drought."

This extract will be referred to the Revenue Department for an expression of opinion as to whether any charge could equitably be levied on the lands in question in consideration of the advantage they would surely derive from the increased quantity of water and greater regularity of supply.

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R.E,
Secretary to Government.

To the Revenue Department.
,, Chief Engineer for Irrigation.
,, District Engineer, Nellore.

Exd. S. T. Austin.

No 69

Proceedings of the Madras Government

487

From the Government of India —

Under date the 20th Dec/72.

Read the following —

835 I

H.S. No. ~~2588~~ J. 26 —

Sept 11th 1872 —

In despatch No 41 dated 31st July 1871 from the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India regarding the Sungum Project for improving the Irrigation on Northern or left bank of Pennair River Nellore District, the following passage occurs.

"It seems intended to allow the holders of Inam

lands to irrigate their fields without any charge although not more than three fourths of their area has been hitherto cultivated at all and the owners will in all cases gain the great advantage of freedom from appre-
-hension of drought"

This extract will be referred to the Revenue Department for an expression of opinion as to whether any charge could equitably be levied on the lands in question in consideration of the advantage they would surely derive from the increased quan-
-tity of water and greater regularity of supply.

O.S.

G.W.W.

52/4

J. 21 Rev Reports
5 - Ch Engineer for Irrigation
6 D.R. Nelligan

Depo 11/1/79

Cir 4174

Govt. of {1872} Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

To The Revenue Department

Dated

Recd. Encl.

G. O., 9 Jany 1873 No. 69.

Nos. 133 & 134

Sungum Project, Nellore District. Passing notes in Nov. Nos. of Govt. of India Commanding copy of Despatch from Sec. of State regarding the Sungum Project and requesting a complete report on certain points.