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# MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

Government of Madras

*Public Works*

DEPARTMENT

|          |       |       |
|----------|-------|-------|
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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,  
10th August 1874.*

Read the following papers:—

No. 202. From Supg. Engineer, Coimbatore, dated 31st March 1874, No. 120.  
No. 203. From do. do. „ 27th April „ „ 12.

No. 450-J.

No. 204. *Note by the Chief Engineer for Irrigation.*

In G. O. of the 30th January 1874, No. 221, certain proposals for altering the Velan tank, in the Municipal limits of Coimbatore, were communicated to the District Engineer for report, and Colonel Bean just before making over the charge of the district forwarded the letter of the 31st March last, No. 120, and the survey of the locality now submitted.

2. The Collector, supported by the opinions of the Sanitary Commissioner and the Civil Surgeon, proposed to lower the level of the water in the Velan tank 1 foot, and to preserve that of the supply in the Peria tank, the two reservoirs being at present in direct communication by the bridge on the Pothanore road (No. 55 on Plan), by converting this bridge into a sluice with regulating shutters.

3. From this modification he anticipated considerable benefit to the town, and very little loss of storage capacity.

4. The Velan tank is long and narrow, but it plays a not unimportant part in the irrigation of the lands in the neighbourhood, and it is not a shallow tank, for at the Railway bridge I observed that the water-marks were 12 to 14 feet above ground level.

Colonel Bean shows that the Velan tank holds 1.415 millions of cubic yards of water up to the crest of its calingulah, and 0.303 millions up to the top of the shutters, which is 1 foot above the crest. Between one-fourth and one-fifth of the storage would therefore be lost were the depth decreased 1 foot; on the other hand, the survey shows how small would be the difference as regards the area of the tank were the water level lowered 1 foot or to the calingulah crest level, or even to 1 foot below this. The present capacity of the Velan tank being 1.718 and the acreage irrigated 913 acres, the storage is equivalent to 1,870 cubic yards an acre, a very moderate allowance.

Again, it is reported that the Peria tank holds 2.211 millions of cubic yards to its calingulah crest level, and 0.533 millions between that and the top of the shutters, which is a foot higher, or its total capacity is 2.744 millions of cubic yards. The area of irrigation is 1,291 acres, so that the storage is at the rate of 2,125 cubic yards an acre. The storage of the two tanks taken together is 2,000 cubic yards an acre, and assuming 7,000 cubic yards as the supply required, and as probably there is a good deal of double crop land, this would seem to be a low estimate, the quantity stored does not seem to be more than sufficient to secure the cultivation during the intervals between freshes in the Noyel, whence the water-supply is obtained.

5. Of course diminished storage in the Velan tank could be compensated for by adding to the capacity of the large tank. Colonel Bean is in error in supposing that it would be necessary to raise the latter 1 foot, for 6 inches would about suffice, and his estimate of Rupees 6,800 for this work might therefore be reduced to Rupees 3,500. It is doubtful, however, whether the improvement would at all

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10th August 1874*

compensate for the outlay of even this smaller sum. Apart from the immaterial reduction of waterspread, the information now afforded shows that the town drains have at present a very fair outfall, some of them, indeed, all that can be desired in this respect.

6. The Municipal Commissioners have stated that their finances would not admit of their spending Rupees 6,800 upon the alterations proposed, and probably when they understand how very small the benefit would be, they will be unwilling to spend anything at all.

7. The upper part of the bed of the Velan tank, to the east of the Railway, is covered with a fibrous weed, which must be likely to cause an unpleasant smell. It does not extend to the deep part of the tank. The only improvement which appeared to me feasible was the exclusion from the bed of this tank of the bit of land to the north of a remains of a channel cut by the late Mr. W. Fraser, when District Engineer of Coimbatore, for the conveyance of sewage, an arrangement never carried out. This is not marked on the survey, but its position is indicated in pencil. It would be necessary to raise the south bank of this channel and to form a bund from it on each side of the channel or drain, which runs parallel to the Railway up to the road close to the tank marked "Railway bridge." The work required would cost very little, and would not affect the capacity of the tank materially, while a considerable spread of very shallow water would be got rid of. The excluded land for short periods would have no efficient drainage, but the rainfall at Coimbatore is small, and probably no inconvenience would result from this circumstance.

8. In G. O., Financial Department, of the 29th May 1872, No. 701, sanction was given to certain reclamation proposals described in the letter from Mr. Wedderburn, printed in Proceedings Madras Government, Financial Department, No. 159, of the 7th February 1872, and it was laid down that it would be necessary to impose stringent conditions to ensure the reclamation being carried out properly. The settlement of the conditions and their enforcement were left to the Municipal Commissioners. The essential condition was that reclamation was to be effected by taking soil out of the bed of the tank to raise the ground along its margin, thus reducing the waterspread and maintaining the capacity. The District Engineer points out in paragraph 8 of his letter that this condition has not been properly enforced, and that the storage space has been reduced. Reclamation should be carried on from the edge of the waterspread inwards, and banks for cutting off unraised land should not be allowed. When I visited the locality in April last, I observed that reclamation was in progress under totally different arrangements to those sanctioned. Near the junction of the two tanks at the west end of the Velan tank a large quantity of town refuse had been deposited, and was being levelled; in time, if this be allowed to go on, there will be very little tank left to the west of the Railway. The District Engineer being the officer responsible for the efficiency of these irrigation works, should, I think, be authorized to stop any interference with them other than that sanctioned by Government, in the Financial Department, in May 1872. Town refuse, moreover, will certainly not make the nearness of the water in these tanks to the town less objectionable in a sanitary point of

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view, for on the water receding the soil exposed to the air will give out gases much more hurtful than those arising from ordinary silt.

OOTACAMUND, (Signed) JOHN MULLINS, Lieut.-Colonel R.E.,  
27th June 1874. Chief Engineer for Irrigation.

No. 205. ORDER THEREON, 10th August 1874, No. 2,203.

IRRIGATION, No. 12.

THE papers submitted appear to indicate that the advantages, which would be secured by reducing the water

level of the Velan tank at Coimbatore would be very small, and that it would not be worth the while of the Municipality to incur for this purpose even the reduced expenditure stated by the Chief Engineer for Irrigation as likely to be sufficient, for storing in the Peria tank the water reduced in the Velan tank.

2. The slight improvement referred to in paragraph 7 of Lieutenant-Colonel Mullins' Note may be carried out by the Municipality if the Superintending Engineer, on examining into the details, sees no objection to its execution.

3. The circumstances brought to notice, as to the way in which reclamations on the margins of the tanks have been carried out contrary to the conditions prescribed when such work was allowed to be undertaken, will be referred to the Financial Department, in which the sanction was accorded. The Superintending Engineer will take care that should any more work likely to affect the efficiency of the tanks as irrigation works be undertaken, or be now in progress, the attention of the Municipality will at once be called to any objections which may present themselves to the judgment of the Superintending Engineer, and if not attended to this officer will report to the Government for orders.

(True Extract.)

Lieut.-Colonel, R.E.,

Joint Secretary to Government.

To the Superintending Engineer, Coimbatore.  
" Chief Engineer for Irrigation.  
" Public Department.  
" Financial Department.

Exd S. T. Austin.  
Spare Copies

#4503

1. By the Chief Engineer for Irrigation  
in L.O. of the 30<sup>th</sup> January 1874-1222  
certain proposals for altering the  
Velau tank, in the Municipal  
limits of Coimbatore, were com-  
municated to the District Engi-  
neer for report, and Colonel Beau-  
jeu before making over the charge  
of the District forwarded the  
letter of the 31 March last-1220  
and the survey of the locality,  
now submitted.

2. The Collector, supported by  
the opinions of the Sanitary  
Commissioners & the Civil Surgeon,  
proposed to lower the level of  
the water in the Velau tank  
one foot, and to preserve that  
of the supply in the Peria tank  
the two reservoirs being at pre-  
sent in direct communication  
by the bridge on the Pothanor  
road (L<sup>o</sup> 55 on Plan), by converting  
this bridge into a sluice with  
regulating shutters.

3. From this modification he  
anticipated considerable bene-  
fit to the town, and very little  
loss of storage capacity.

4. The Velau tank is long and  
narrow

narrow, but it plays a not unimportant part in the irrigation of the lands in the neighborhood, and it is not a shallow tank, for at the Railway bridge I observed that the water marks were 12 to 14 feet above ground level.

Colonel Bean shows that the Velan tank holds 1.415 millions of cubic yards of water up to the crest of its calingulah, & 0.303 millions up to the top of the shutters, which is one foot above the crest. Between one-fourth one-fifth of the storage would therefore be lost were the depth decreased 1 foot; on the other hand the survey shows how small would be the difference as regards the area of the tank were the water level lowered one foot, or to the calingulah crest level or even to 1 foot below this.

The present capacity of the Velan tank being 1.718 and the acreage irrigated 913 acres, the storage is equivalent to 1870 cubic yards an acre, a very moderate allowance.

Again it is reported that the Velan tank holds 2.211 millions

of cubic yards to its calingulah crest level, and 0.533 millions between that and the top of the shutters, which is a foot higher; its total capacity is 2.744 millions of cubic yards. The area of irrigation is 1291 acres, so that the storage is at the rate of 2.125 cubic yards an acre. The storage of the two tanks taken together is 2000 cubic yards an acre and pumping 7000 cubic yards as the supply required, and as probably there is a good deal of double crop land this would seem to be a low estimate. The quantity stored does not seem to be more than sufficient to secure the cultivation during the intervals between freshes in the Koyel, whenever the water supply is obtained.

5 of course diminished storage in the Velan tank could be compensated for by adding to the capacity of the large tank. Colonel Bean is in error in supposing that it would be necessary to raise the latter 1 foot, for 6 inches would about suffice, and his estimate of Rupees 6800 for this work might therefore be

be reduced to Rupees 3500. It is doubtful however whether the improvement would at all compensate for the outlay of even this smaller sum. Apart from the immaterial reduction of water spread, the information now afforded shows that the town drains have at present a very fair outfall, some of them indeed all that can be desired in this respect.

6. The Municipal Commissioners have stated that their finances would not admit of their spending Rupees 6800 upon the alterations proposed, and probably when they understand how very small the benefit would be they will be unwilling to spend anything at all.

7. The upper part of the bed of the Telan Tank, to the east of the Railway, is covered with a fibrous weed which must be likely to cause an unpleasant smell. It does not extend to the deep part of the tank. The only improvement which appeared to me feasible was the exclusion.

exclusion from the bed of the tank of the bit of land to the north of the remains of the channel cut by the late Mr. V. Fraser, when District Engineer of Coimbatore, for the conveyance of sewage, an arrangement never carried out. This is not marked on the survey, but its position is indicated in pencil. It would be necessary to raise the 'South' bank of this channel and to form a bend from it on the East side of the channel or drain, which runs parallel to the Railway up to the road close to the tunnel marked 'Railway bridge'. The work required would cost very little, and would not affect the capacity of the tank materially, while a considerable spread of very shallow water would be got rid of. The excluded land for short periods would have no efficient drainage, but the rainfall at Coimbatore is small, probably no inconvenience would result from this circumstance.

8. In L.O. Financial Department of the 29<sup>th</sup> May 1872, N<sup>o</sup> 701, sanction was given to certain reclamation proposals described in the letter from Mr. Wedderburn printed in P.M. L.O. N<sup>o</sup> 159 of the 7<sup>th</sup> February 1872, and it was laid down that it would be necessary to impose stringent conditions to ensure the reclamation being carried out properly. The settlement of the conditions and their enforcement were left to the Municipal Commissioners. The essential condition was that reclamation was to be effected by taking soil out of the bed of the tank to raise the ground along its margin, thus reducing the waterspread and maintaining the capacity. The District Engineer points out in para 8. of his letter that this condition has not been properly enforced, and that the storage space has been reduced. Reclamation should be carried on

from the edge of the waterspread inwards and banks for cutting off unraided land should not be allowed. When I visited the locality in April last I observed that reclamation was in progress under totally different arrangements to those sanctioned. Near the junction of the two tanks, at the west end of the Telan tank, a large quantity of town refuse had been deposited, and was being levelled: in time, if this be allowed to go on, there will be very little tank left to the west of the Railway. The District Engineer being the officer responsible for the execution of these irrigation works, should I think, be authorised to stop any interference with them other than that sanctioned by Government, in the Financial Department, in May 1872. Town refuse moreover will certainly not make the nearness of the water in these tanks to the town less objectionable in a sanitary point of view; for, on the water receding the

the mud exposed to the air  
will give out gases much more  
hurtful than those arising from  
ordinary silt.

Noted and  
27 June 1874  
Underlined Lt Col M.  
Chief Engineer for Irrigation  
To The Secretary to Govt P.W.D.

P.W. 1874 Dept.  
No: 4661.

The Chief Engineer  
for Irrigation

Dated 27 June 1874.  
Recd. 27 June 1874.

No: 4661 E. 4

Note on the  
proposed alterations  
to the Velan tank  
in the boundaries  
Municipality.

G.O. No: 2203. 10-8-74.

10/2/74

Public Works Department  
Proceedings of the Madras Government  
From the  
The Dy. Commr. (P.W. & C. 120 dated 21 March 1874)  
To Chief Eng. for Irrigation (P.W. & C. 120 dated 27 June 1874)  
4507.

The papers sub-  
mitted appear to in-  
dicate that the ad-  
vantages, which would  
be secured by reducing  
the water level of the  
Velan Tank at Coim-  
batore would be very  
small, and that it  
would not be worth the  
while of the Muni-  
cipality to incur for  
this purpose even  
the reduced expendi-  
ture stated by the  
Chief Engineer for  
Irrigation as likely  
to be sufficient, for  
storing in the Veria  
tank the water re-  
duced in the Velan  
tank

tank

2. The slight improvement referred to in para 7 of Lieut Colonel Mullins' note may be carried out by the Municipality if the District Engineer, on examining into the details, sees no objection to its execution.

3. The circumstances brought to notice, as to the way in which reclamations on the margins of the tanks have been carried out contrary to the conditions prescribed when such work was allowed to be undertaken, will be referred to the Financial Department, in which the sanction was accorded. The District Engineer will take care that should

any

2/1/74

any more work likely to affect the efficiency of the tanks as irrigation works be undertaken, or be now in progress, the attention of the Municipality is at once be

called thereto, with present themselves to the independent view to its immediate discontinuance of the D. Eng. and if not attended to the Officer will report to the Govt for orders.

All further reclamation arrangements also should receive the District Engineer's approval before they are sanctioned by the Municipality for execution.

2/7/74  
C.M.V.

36  
4  
To The D. E. Pimpri  
--- Chf. Eng. for Irrigation with 4 Engrs.  
--- Pub. Dept.  
--- Financial  
Sign & d. Capri des 2/1/74

4661

Govt. of Mysore

PUBLIC WORKS



The Supp. Supt.  
Comptroller

10 Aug 2203

Dec. 212-214

Telam Tank

Passing orders on  
note by the Chief Engr  
for irrigation on the  
proposed alterations  
to the Tank in the  
Comptroller Municipality