

2. Date of repair. 15-2-37
3. Initials of Referer
M.R.O. 1-32400-22-11-30

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	270	Press Mis.
Dated	7-3-	1870.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

15/2/37

No. 32

FROM

E. C. BAYLEY, Esq.,
Secretary to the Govt. of India,

To

THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE GOVT., MADRAS.

Home Dept.
Public.

FORT WILLIAM, the 8 February 1870.

SIR,

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1182, dated the 12th August last, on the subject of the compilation of a Gazetteer for the Madras Presidency, and, in reply, to communicate the following observations.

2. The correspondence enclosed in your letter exhibits the steps taken by the Madras Government towards the preparation of District Manuals, with a view to the ultimate compilation of a Gazetteer for the whole Presidency. The proposal to prepare District Manuals appears to have been a very old one, revived in 1862 by the "Committee for simplifying routine business." The Government of Madras adopted the Committee's suggestion, and in September 1865 accepted the offer made by Mr. Carmichael, Collector of Vizagapatam, to undertake the compilation of a model Manual of that district, and by Mr. Nelson to compile a similar work for the district of Madura. These officers were not relieved of their regular duties, but were paid a special remuneration for the extra labor imposed on them.

3. When completed, the Board of Revenue submitted to the Government of Madras Messrs. Carmichael and Nelson's works, and, while refraining from detailed criticism, observed that the publications were wanting in brevity and defective in statistics. The Madras Government have recorded their approval of both works, and have granted a donation of Rupees 2,500 to each of the compilers. They have, at the same time, requested the submission of the names of officers willing to undertake the preparation of the Manuals of other districts on the same terms as those of Vizagapatam and Madura. The proceedings submitted by you conclude with the order of the Madras Government, directing the adoption of this scheme of District Manuals, and the preparation from the materials thus collected of a Gazetteer for the whole Presidency by a special officer selected for the purpose.

4. On a careful consideration of the whole subject, the Governor General in Council desires me to observe that, in an extensive undertaking like this, in which the aggregate expenditure is apt to escape attention or check by being disbursed in small instalments spread over several years, it is absolutely necessary for the Government to have a clear idea at starting of the total cost which the scheme adopted will involve. The Madras Government takes districts as the units in its scheme, and allows Rupees 2,500 for a Manual of each district, exclusive of the charges for publication. The papers submitted with your letter under reply do not afford complete information on this last point, and an estimate has therefore been obtained of the total cost of printing, binding, paper and maps in respect of the Vizagapatam and Madura Manuals. It appears from this estimate that the net charge for an edition of 500 copies would be Rupees 7 per copy for the Madura Manual, and Rupees 4-8 per copy for the Vizagapatam Manual.

5. Assuming that the average charge per district in the Madras Presidency would be the mean between the charges for the two Manuals now finished, the rate would be Rupees 5-12 per copy, or Rupees 2,875 for the edition of 500 copies. Add to this the sum allowed for compilation, and the total cost amounts to Rupees 5,375 per district, or Rupees 1,00,750 for the twenty districts of the Madras Presidency. This sum represents merely the cost of the materials for the general Gazetteer, and exclusive of the salary of the special officer whom it is proposed to entertain for working them up.

6. Were the same system to be adopted elsewhere, the cost for district Manuals alone would amount to about £100,000 for all India. It may be objected to this calculation that, although the sum of Rupees 2,500 per district is considered a fair remuneration in Madras, yet a smaller sum may suffice in Provinces where the administrative divisions are smaller. But the progressive influences or other difficulties which complicate the administration, and tend to make the districts smaller, are generally the very circumstances which render an elaborate treatment necessary in a work like the Gazetteer; and if districts are accepted as units in the calculation, and Rupees 2,500 be sanctioned for each in Madras, it will be difficult to deny an equitable claim on the part of officers in other Provinces to the same amount.

7. As regards the quality of the work already done in Madras at this enormous cost, it is only necessary to refer to the deficiency in statistics, and to the prolixity in details, upon which both the Board of Revenue and the Local Government have animadverted. In the case of the Madura Manual, the prolixity is so excessive as to render it comparatively useless to the general public.

8. The Governor General in Council is, however, not disposed to enter upon a detailed criticism of the plan. He believes that the plan adopted in Madras rests altogether on a wrong basis, and that, in addition to its needless costliness, it has other defects of a very serious nature. It throws the compilation of the District Gazetteer on one local officer, while the fact is that a large proportion of the information required can be obtained most easily and most accurately from the Heads of Departments in the Presidency town. To take the single example of the Police Administration, His Excellency in Council believes that it would involve less correspondence and delay to get the returns of all districts from the Inspector General than to obtain and verify the returns of a single district from the local officers. The same reasoning holds good in the analogous cases of Jail Returns, the statistics of the criminal classes, Medical, Meteorological and Geological Returns.

9. Another defect of the plan is that it seems to overlook the existence of a vast store of materials, printed and manuscript, which has accumulated during more than a century, for a work of this nature, unless such materials happen to be found in the district record rooms, or to be immediately within reach of the district officials. The Madras records contain an invaluable series of district topographical reports, prepared many years ago by the medical officers of the period. And in any Province it would probably be possible to compile a better Gazetteer from the records at the seat of Government, without recourse to district records, than *vice versa*. But the two classes should supplement each other, neither being neglected.

10. According to this system, about to be adopted in Bengal, the district officers will send in their reports in manuscript to a special officer working under the Local Government. It will be the duty of this central officer to examine them carefully, supplement deficiencies from the materials available at head quarters, expunge the redundancies and prolixities which may exist in them, and then

No 12 Aug 1890 81288
6 October - No 25

No 270 - 7 March 1890
Communicated to the Revenue
Department with reference to
No. 1 of the 12th August last. No 1131.

H. A. J.
to the Revenue Department. No 270

Public 1890. Sept
From
Secy to Govt of India
Revenue Dept
733

483 Set
4213
586

No 258

forming observations upon
the cost of compiling a
"Gazetteer of the Madras
Presidency"

With an order

23/2/90
27/3

32 + 33.

Cham. 1870
Public. 1870

To
The Revenue Dept.

March 7.

7. March 70 270.

No. 32 + 33.

Commis. observations
of the Govt. of India
on the subject of the
compilation of a
Gazetteer for the Madras
Presidency -