

1. Number 10
2. Date 17-5-37
3. Initials or Reference
M.R.O. 1-30,000-10-10-37

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	1490	Press Mis.
Dated	29-9-	19 1871

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 144. Read the following Extract from the Proceedings of the Government of India in the Department of Agriculture, Revenue, and Commerce, dated Simla, 8th September 1871, No. 102 (Statistics):—

Read—

A Plan for an *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, dated 29th November 1869, from W. W. Hunter, Esq., to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department.

A Note on the progress of the statistical operations in connexion with the *Imperial Gazetteer* in 1870 and 1871 by W. W. Hunter, Esq., dated 1st June 1871.

Office Memorandum to Financial Department, No. 64, dated 2nd August 1871.

„ „ from „ „ „ 3189, dated 30th August 1871.

RESOLUTION.—The Governor-General has had under his careful consideration the question of the preparation of Provincial *Gazetteers*, and their eventual consolidation into an Imperial Statistical Account of India.

2. Three distinct series of operations have, in time past, been undertaken or encouraged by the Government, with a view to obtaining trustworthy accounts of of the country, such as might form a *Gazetteer of India*; the whole representing a very large outlay, commencing as far back as 1769, and one of the efforts* costing £30,000 for merely collecting the materials for part of a single Province.

* That of Dr. Buchanan under the instructions of the Governor-General in Council in 1807.

3. From a variety of causes, all more or less proceeding from defective organization, this large expenditure, while accumulating isolated materials of great value, failed to yield any systematic and comprehensive result. At length, in 1855, the Court of Directors directed the Governor-General to procure by local inquiries, and “with as little delay as possible, such information as may be effective for rendering the work a faithful register of the state of the country as at present existing.”†

† Despatch, No. 1 of 1855, Statistical Department, dated 21st February 1855.

4. Since then, various attempts have been made by the Local Governments to give effect to these orders. It was practically found that no satisfactory basis existed for the work, and, as early as 1862, the Subordinate Governments began to strike out new plans for drawing up a statistical and geographical account of their territories. In March of that year, the Madras Government issued orders for a series of District Manuals, which should exhibit the entire Presidency in minute detail. Subsequently, Sir Richard Temple inaugurated the statistical operations which have produced the *Gazetteer of the Central Provinces*; and, more recently, the Collectors in Eastern Bengal were directed to draw up a series of District Reports, which were printed in 1868 under the title of the “Principal Heads of the History and Statistics of the Dacca Division.”

5. The divergence from the original plan, which had thus taken place under the Local Administrations, was accepted by the Supreme Government; and, in May 1867, it was suggested whether a work similar to the *Gazetteer of the Central Provinces* might not, with advantage, be compiled for Bengal, the Punjaub, Oudh, Mysore and and Coorg, British Burmah, and Hyderabad. Three months later the plan received the approval of the Secretary of State, and, on the 19th October 1867, the Government of India addressed all the Local Administrations, requesting that “steps may be taken for the compilation of a *Gazetteer* in accordance with the wishes of Her Majesty’s Government.”

6. Various schemes were set on foot to give effect to these orders, some of them so costly as to be altogether disproportionate to the results to be attained; but His Excellency in Council observes that excessive costliness is not the only unfortunate effect of the want of organization which left each Local Government to invent a scheme of its own, irrespective of what was being done in other Provinces. There was, in fact, no unity of plan or central supervision, and the results did not contain the materials required for the comparative statistics of the Empire. Meanwhile, the necessity of some systematic organization had been pressed on the Government of India from various quarters, particularly by the Commercial Community and the Asiatic Society of Bengal. This latter body urged that, without a uniform plan, "the value of each local *Gazetteer* will, in a measure, be depreciated, and, whenever the compilation of the *Gazetteer of India* shall be determined on, a considerable amount of the work will have to be gone over again *de novo*." Accordingly, in July 1869, His Excellency in Council declared his conviction that immediate steps should be taken to ensure uniformity, and, to that end, appointed Mr. W. W. Hunter, LL. D., of the Civil Service, to visit the Local Governments, and ascertain what had been done in each, with a view to his drawing up a comprehensive scheme, prescribing the principles for the compilation of the Provincial *Gazetteers* and for their ultimate consolidation into one work.

7. In November 1869, Mr. Hunter submitted his plan for an *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, in which he exhaustively explained the materials already available, and arranged for that systematic organization and central control, the absence of which had proved fatal to the completeness of all the previous efforts from 1769 to 1855, and to the progress of the present one throughout the fifteen years during which the operations have been going on between 1855 and 1870. The final consideration of his plan was, however, postponed till the then contemplated Department of Agriculture, Revenue, and Commerce should be formed. Meanwhile, his services were temporarily retained on deputation, and, after an interval, the deputation was renewed, with a view to his arranging, so far as his position permitted, for uniformity in the provincial compilations in progress during the past eighteen months. He also continued to perform his duties as Compiler of the *Bengal Gazetteer*.

8. Even the moderate degree of supervision which he was thus able to exercise on the operations has produced favourable results. The work published during the two years, 1870 and 1871, will form five volumes, containing 2,000 pages, and dealing with a territory of 131,453 square miles. This area, although between two and three times the size of England and Wales, forms only a fragment of the whole work to be done. The general statistical operations will extend over ten separate Governments, which, with their feudatory States, administer a territory of 1,556,836 square miles and govern a population estimated at 200,424,072 souls. The *Gazetteer of India* represents, therefore, a series of local inquiries and comparative statistics spread over an area but little less than that of all Europe, excepting Russia. Throughout this vast territory widely different schemes have been propounded by the Local Administrations, some of them involving a very extravagant outlay, others of too meagre a character. Each Local Government has given its own interpretation to the work, and the experience of the last few years shows that, in the absence of a central organization, the cost of the enterprise will swell to an enormous total, while

the same heterogeneous incompleteness, which rendered all previous efforts infructuous, will again result.

9. Meanwhile, the Provincial *Gazetteers* have reached a stage which imperatively demands some uniform system and some guiding authority. It seems to the Governor-General in Council that the time has come for taking definite steps to ensure that uniformity of plan, without which it is hopeless to look for a successful issue from so widely extended a statistical operation. It is desirable that a large amount of individual freedom should be permitted to each of the Local Governments, but it is absolutely necessary that each of the Provincial *Gazetteers* should contain the materials requisite for the comparative statistics of the Empire. Without a central guiding authority, economy and uniformity are alike impossible. The Governor-General in Council is of opinion that this central control can best be obtained by the Government availing itself of the suggestions contained in Mr. Hunter's plan, and by securing for the execution of the design the supervision of the designer. Subject to the approval of the Right Honourable the Secretary of State, His Excellency in Council is, therefore, pleased to appoint Mr. Hunter Director-General of Statistics to the Government of India for the above purpose and for the consolidation of the Provincial Accounts into the *Imperial Gazetteer*. Mr. Hunter will also continue to conduct the operations of the *Bengal Gazetteer*, the compilation of which, the Government has ascertained, can be carried on in connexion with his new duties.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded, for information

Government of Madras.	Chief Commissioner of Oudh.
" Bombay.	" " Burmah.
" Bengal.	" " Central Provinces.
" North-Western Provinces.	" " Mysore and Coorg.
" Punjab.	Resident at Hyderabad.
* Home Department.	Military Department.
Foreign "	Public Works "
Financial "	Legislative "

and guidance, to the Local Governments and Administrations noted in the margin, and for information to the several Departments* of the Government of India.

Ordered, also, that a copy be forwarded, for information and guidance, to Mr. W. W. Hunter, LL. D.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) A. O. HUME,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.

No. 145. ORDER THEREON, 30th September 1871, No. 1490.

Communicated to the Revenue Department in continuation of G. O., dated 7th March 1870, No. 270, and No. 1083, dated the 27th August 1870.

(True Extract.)

Captain, R. E.,
Acting Joint Secretary, P. W. D.
for Chief Secretary.

To the Revenue Department.
Exd. J. H. Burns.

Bobt. of 118713 ~~30~~ adras.

PUBLIC.

To
THE REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Dated September, 80th.

Recd.

And

G. O., 30th September 1871, No. 1490.

SEPTEMBER.
Nos. 144-145.

Communicating Resolution of Government of India respecting the preparation of Provincial *Gazetteers* and their eventual consolidation into an Imperial Statistical Account of India.

Appointment of W. W. Hunter, Esquire, LL. D., as Director General of Statistics to the Government of India.

Nos. 102-

Extract from the Proceedings of the Government of India in the Department of Agriculture, Revenue, and Commerce,—dated Simla, the 8th September 1871.

[STATISTICS.]

READ—

- A Plan for an *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, dated 29th November 1869, from W. W. Hunter, Esq., to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department.
- A Note on the progress of the statistical operations in connection with the *Imperial Gazetteer* in 1870 and 1871, by W. W. Hunter, Esq., dated 1st June 1871.
- Office Memorandum to Financial Department, No. 64, dated 2nd August 1871.
- „ „ from „ „ „ 3189, dated 30th August 1871.

RESOLUTION.

THE Governor General has had under his careful consideration the question of the preparation of Provincial Gazetteers, and their eventual consolidation into an Imperial Statistical Account of India.

2. Three distinct series of operations have in time past been undertaken or encouraged by the Government, with a view to obtaining trustworthy accounts of the country, such as might form a Gazetteer of India; the whole representing a very large outlay, commencing as far back as 1769, and one of the efforts* costing £30,000 for merely collecting the materials for part of a single Province.

* That of Dr. Buchanan under the instructions of the Governor General in Council in 1807.

3. From a variety of causes, all more or less proceeding from defective organisation, this large expenditure, while accumulating isolated materials of great value, failed to yield any systematic and comprehensive result. At length in 1855 the Court of Directors directed the Governor General to procure by local enquiries, and “with as little delay as possible, such information as may be effective for rendering the work a faithful register of the state of the country as at present existing.”*

* Despatch No. 1 of 1855, Statistical Department, dated 21st February 1855.

4. Since then various attempts have been made by the Local Governments to give effect to these orders. It was practically found that no satisfactory basis existed for the work, and as early as 1862 the subordinate Governments began to strike out new plans for drawing up a statistical and geographical account of their territories. In March of that year the Madras Government issued orders for a series of District Manuals, which should exhibit the entire Presidency in minute detail. Subsequently, Sir Richard Temple inaugurated the statistical operations which have produced the *Gazetteer* of the Central Provinces; and more recently the Collectors in Eastern Bengal were directed to draw up a series of District Reports, which were printed in 1868 under the title of the “Principal Heads of the History and Statistics of the Dacca Division.”

5. The divergence from the original plan which had thus taken place under the Local Administrations, was accepted by the Supreme Government: and in May 1867 it was suggested whether a work similar to

the *Gazetteer* of the Central Provinces might not with advantage be compiled for Bengal, the Panjab, Oudh, Mysore and Curg, British Burmah, and Haidrabad. Three months later the plan received the approval of the Secretary of State, and on the 19th October 1867 the Government of India addressed all the Local Administrations, requesting that "steps may be taken for the compilation of a *Gazetteer* in accordance with the wishes of Her Majesty's Government."

6. Various schemes were set on foot to give effect to these orders, some of them so costly as to be altogether disproportionate to the results to be attained. But His Excellency in Council observes that excessive costliness is not the only unfortunate effect of the want of organization, which left each Local Government to invent a scheme of its own, irrespective of what was being done in other Provinces. There was, in fact, no unity of plan or central supervision, and the results did not contain the materials required for the comparative statistics of the empire. Meanwhile the necessity of some systematic organization had been pressed on the Government of India from various quarters, particularly by the Commercial Community and the Asiatic Society of Bengal. This latter body urged that, without a uniform plan, "the value of each local *Gazetteer* will, in a measure, be depreciated, and whenever the compilation of the *Gazetteer of India* shall be determined on, a considerable amount of the work will have to be gone over again *de novo*." Accordingly, in July 1869, His Excellency in Council declared his conviction that immediate steps should be taken to ensure uniformity, and to that end appointed Mr. W. W. Hunter, LL. D., of the Civil Service, to visit the Local Governments and ascertain what had been done in each, with a view to his drawing up a comprehensive scheme, prescribing the principles for the compilation of the Provincial *Gazetteers* and for their ultimate consolidation into one work.

7. In November 1869 Mr. Hunter submitted his Plan for an Imperial *Gazetteer* of India, in which he exhaustively explained the materials already available, and arranged for that systematic organisation and central control, the absence of which had proved fatal to the completeness of all the previous efforts from 1769 to 1855, and to the progress of the present one throughout the fifteen years during which the operations have been going on between 1855 and 1870. The final consideration of his Plan was, however, postponed till the then contemplated Department of Agriculture, Revenue, and Commerce should be formed. Meanwhile his services were temporarily retained on deputation, and after an interval the deputation was renewed with a view to his arranging, so far as his position permitted, for uniformity in the provincial compilations in progress during the past eighteen months. He also continued to perform his duties as Compiler of the *Bengal Gazetteer*.

8. Even the moderate degree of supervision which he was thus able to exercise on the operations, has produced favorable results. The work published during the two years, 1870 and 1871, will form five volumes, containing 2,000 pages, and dealing with a territory of 131,453 square miles. This area, although between two and three times the size of England and Wales, forms only a fragment of the whole work to be done. The general statistical operations will extend over ten separate Governments, which, with their feudatory States, administer a territory of 1,556,836 square miles and govern a population estimated at 200,424,072 souls. The *Gazetteer of India* represents, therefore, a series of local enquiries and comparative statistics spread over an area but little less than that of all Europe, excepting Russia. Throughout this vast territory widely different schemes have been propounded by the Local Administrations; some of them involving a very extravagant outlay, others of too meagre a character. Each Local Government has given its own interpretation to the work, and the experience of the last few years shows that, in the absence of a central organization, the cost of the enterprise will swell to an enormous total, while the same heterogenous incompleteness which rendered all previous efforts infructuous, will again result.

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ORDER.—Ordered, that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded, for information and guidance, to the Local Governments and Administrations noted in the margin,* and for information to the several Departments of the Government of India.†

* Government of Madras.	Chief Commissioner of Oudh.	Burmah.
" Bombay.	" "	Central
" Bengal.	" "	Provinces.
" North-Western	" "	Mysore and
Provinces.	" "	Coorg.
" Panjab.	Resident at Haidrabad.	
† Home Department.	Military Department.	
Foreign "	Public Works "	
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(True Extract,)

Secretary to the Govt. of India.

10-20-8
144-145
Cotacumund. 30 Sept. 1871. No 1490

Communicated to the Revenue Dept.
in continuation of G. O. dated 7. March/70.
No. 270. and No. 1083 - of the 27. August/70.

To the Revenue Department 29/9/71

list of 6

79
Govt. of 1871 Madras.
Public
The Revenue Dept.

Dated Sept. 29.
Recd

Encl.

G. O. 29 Sept. 1871, No 1490

Nos. 144. 145.

Comm. Res. of Govt. of India
respecting the preparation
of Provincial Gazetteers and
their eventual Consolidation
into an Imperial Statistical
Account of India.

Communicating
Proclamation on the subject
of the preparation of
Provincial Gazetteers
and their eventual
consolidation into an
Imperial Statistical Ac.
-count of India.

No 1490

Public Department
The Government
of India
No 1083
No 270