

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue

DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1349

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283-284

Dated 18 - 6 - 1862.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
18th June 1862.*

No. 283. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Public Works Department, dated 7th June 1862, No. 1,289:—

Letter from Revenue Board furnishing information on the enquiry whether the Board's interdict against the levy of a water-cess in addition to the consolidated Nanjah assessment on "Mamool uci" lands in the Masulipatam District under the influence of the Aicut works, pending the survey and revision of the assessment, had been extended beyond that District, ordered to be brought to the notice of the Home Authorities.

(Vide Public Works Proceedings, 7th June 1862, Nos. 116, 147.)

No. 284. ORDER THEREON, 18th June 1862, No. 1,319.

Ordered to be communicated to the Board of Revenue, with reference to their letter dated 15th May 1862, No. 3,143.

(Signed) P. P. HUTCHINS,
Acting Deputy Secretary to Government.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Despatch from the Right Honorable Sir C. WOOD, Bart., Secretary of State for India, to His Excellency the Honorable the Governor in Council, Fort Saint George, dated India Office, London, 15th June 1860, No. 39.

SIR,

1. The Report for 1858-59 of operations in the Public Works Department, transmitted with your letter No. 6 of 10th February last, has been laid before me in Council.

2. One passage in the Report, which has not failed to attract attention, is that relative to the very great cost of establishments, in comparison with the remaining expenditure on Public Works. Although the outlay on labor and materials did not much exceed 450,000L., the charges of all kinds on account of superintending and executive officers and subordinates amounted to 166,478L., or 36 per cent. on the sum first named. Such excessive disproportion, which, I am aware, is by no means peculiar to your Presidency, may be accounted for by the fact that the scale on which the Public Works Department is organized was adopted with a view to operations far more extensive than, owing to financial difficulties, it has hitherto been possible to undertake. Still, unless there be a probability of a more just relation being speedily established between the quantity of work to be done and the machinery employed for superintending it, the propriety of re-modelling the latter on a more economical plan will certainly deserve consideration.

3. I must also notice the large amount appropriated to repairs, being nearly thirty lacs of Rupees out of a total of forty-five. It is stated in explanation, that during the year under review the necessity for repairs was largely increased by damage done to irrigation works and roads by the unusual violence of the monsoon; but it is admitted that ever since the department was constituted on its present footing the annual expenditure on repairs has much exceeded the previous average. It has been alleged that, in Tanjore at least, where the outlay on repairs has been highest, irrigation works are not maintained in better condition than formerly; and that minor repairs, which at one time Collectors were empowered to order at their own discretion, are now either neglected or greatly delayed, in consequence of the withdrawal from revenue officers of their old discretionary authority. I observe in your President's minute on his recent Southern tour, that on the representation of the people and revenue authorities of Tanjore and Trichinopoly, of the inconveniences attending the arrangements under which minor works of repair are placed under the sole control of the officers of the Department of Public Works, he has already proposed to revert in part to the practice which existed previously to the remodelling of the Public Works Department, and to entrust the maintenance in efficiency of certain irrigation works to the Collector of the District. If this plan be adopted, and succeeds in those districts, it would seem desirable to extend it to others.

4. The most interesting portion of the Report is the picture drawn of the prosperity of the districts irrigated by the Godavery and Kistna works. The statement, that in Rajahmundry the ryots' profits amounted to twenty-four Rupees per acre may not perhaps be strictly accurate; but it derives some confirmation from the fact, that when other portions of the Madras territories were suffering from drought 2,400,000 maunds of grain were exported for their relief from the delta of the Godavery. If, as is also stated, it would have been impossible to transport the grain from the interior of the districts to the sea without the canals to which its production was in the first instance due, no better proof can be desired of the value of those canals both for irrigation and navigation.

5. It seems clear, however, that the State is receiving much less than its proper share of the pecuniary returns from the canals. Mr. Dykes, who was specially commissioned to inquire into the subject, is represented to have found the extent of land irrigated to be in Rajahmundry 56 per cent., and in Masulipatam 86 per cent. beyond what it had been stated to be in the returns of the Revenue Department. This would show that on more than one-half of the irrigated land in the one province, and on more than three-fourths in the other, the water cess or other revenue to which Government is entitled is not collected; a state of things which requires explanation. Possibly it may be explained in Mr. Dykes' report; but, notwithstanding the importance of that document, no copy of it, so far as I can learn, has yet reached this office. I beg to be furnished with one without further delay.

6. With regard to Masulipatam, an additional reason is assigned for the small increase of revenue resulting from irrigation, the Board of Revenue having interdicted the levy of any water cess on "mamool wet" land, on the ground, it is presumed, that these lands, having already been assessed as irrigated lands, receiving a full supply of water, are not properly subject to the imposition of higher rates.

7. The state of these lands will shortly come under the consideration of the officers charged with the conduct of the general survey and assessment of the Madras Presidency, when their productive powers must be carefully examined, and the future demand on them regulated, so that they may bear their just proportion of the burthen of taxation, equally with other lands possessing similar capabilities and advantages.

8. It is not stated whether the interdict of the Board of Revenue against the enhancement of the demand on land of this description is applicable solely to the district of Masulipatam, or whether it includes other districts affected by the new irrigation works, and on this point more precise information than that afforded in this report is required.

9. With regard to what is said of the total failure of the crops in Tanjore, it would seem that that province suffered peculiarly from the "general scarcity of rain throughout the peninsula," and that the southern markets, usually supplied from that province, stood peculiarly in need of the relief derived from the superabundant harvests at Rajahmundry.

10. The deficiency of water accounts for this state of things, notwithstanding the existence in Tanjore of an efficient system of irrigation works.

11. In noticing the new barracks for Sappers and Miners at Dowlaishwaram, the report speaks favorably of Ransome's brick-making machine, which turned out daily 10,000 bricks "at about the same price as those of native make, but decidedly superior in quality." The price mentioned is nine Annas per thousand; which you consider to be understated. I shall be glad to be further informed on the point, as a knowledge of the real cost of the bricks will be useful here in drawing a comparison between Ransome's machines and those of other manufacturers, when requisitions for any of them are hereafter received from India.

12. With regard to the East Coast Canal, the information furnished is little more encouraging than before. On the section known as Cochrane's Canal, the only one which pays its expenses, the net revenue is set down at Rupees 24,066, a trifle more than that of the preceding year, but though there was also a small increase in the tonnage of boats, their number had diminished. On the new cut to Dugarápatam, the traffic is described as gradually improving, but the whole number of trips made upon it during the year was only 573, so that on an average not two boats could have been plying upon it daily. With regard to the traffic on the southern section from the Adayir to Sadras, no information is given. All that is known is that Rupees 4,555 was spent in repairs during the year, and that no tolls have yet been collected.

13. A contrast to the East Coast Canal is presented at Paumben, where more favorable results have been attained at small expense, a commodious channel for laden ships of 200 tons drawing 11 feet of water having been formed at a total cost of about 36,000*l.*, and where, independently of the benefit to navigation, a pecuniary return, averaging about 1,000*l.* yearly, is obtained by Government in the shape of tolls.

ORDER THEREON, 24th December 1860, No. 2,653.

Ordered to lie over; this Despatch will be taken into consideration with the papers about the reconstitution of the Public Works Department, recorded in the Proceedings of Government of this day's date, No. 2,652.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. D. SIM,
Acting Secretary to Government.

Exd. T. McMostry.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.
Revenue.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following letter from W. HUDLESTON, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, to Lieutenant-Colonel W. H. HORSLEY, Secretary to Government, Department Public Works, dated Madras, 15th May 1862, No. 3,143:—

SIR,

In Cons. 26th April 1862, No. 2,460. 1. In reply to the Government Order, dated 25th April 1862, No. 836, referring to the Board for report paragraph 8 of the Despatch from the Secretary of State, dated 15th June 1860, No. 39, requiring to be informed whether the Board's interdict against the levy of a water cess in addition to the consolidated Nunjah assessment on "Mamool wet" lands in the Masulipatam District under the influence of the Anicut works, pending the survey and revision of the assessment, had been extended beyond that District, I am directed by the Board to state that the correspondence noted in the margin was not communicated to any other District than Masulipatam, and that the application of the principle was to the best of their belief limited to those cases to which it was intended to apply when enunciated.

2. The Government are aware that since the date of the Proceedings in question, the survey of the District has been made, and its assessment revised on the principle of a distinct charge for the land according to its intrinsic qualities when unirrigated, and of a cess for water supplied from Government works. The proposals of the Settlement Department are now under the Board's consideration and will shortly be submitted to Government.

3. The rules for the imposition of the water cess were approved by Government, in their Proceedings, dated 26th October 1861, No. 2,054, and have in many cases been already brought into operation.

ORDER THEREON, 7th June 1862, No. 1,289.

Ordered that this letter be brought to the notice of the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India, with reference to paragraph 8 of his letter, dated 15th June 1860, No. 39.
(True Extract.)

W. H. Horsley Lieut.-Colonel,
Secretary to Government.

To the Revenue Department, with copy of Despatch.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

Ms. 1349

2 minutes at the Board of Directors
2 minutes with reference to the in letter
dated 15th May 1882 to 3/4 3 -

Frank W. George
18th June 1862

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No 283 & 284.

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