

(1) Number of pages _____

(2) Date of repair _____

(3) Initials of the Referencer _____

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

General DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. *1353*

Press
Mis.

Dated *19-6-1866* 18.

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE MALRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read again letter from the Collector of Kistna District, dated 24th August and recorded in Proceedings 10th October 1861, No. 1,962.

Read also the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue :—

Submitting with the Board's observations report of the Director of Revenue Settlement on the assessment to be fixed on the Gudur Pargana, with reference to its restoration to the Ex-Zamindár. (Here enter 20th March 1862, No. 1,878.)

ORDER THEREON, 19th June 1862, No. 1,353.

* G. O. No. 1,214 of 18th June 1861.

1. The Government have already* directed the restoration of the Gudur Estate to the Ex-Zamindár on such a Peshkash as may be adapted to its present improved condition. With a view to determine the amount of that Peshkash they proceed to consider in detail theseveral proposals of the Collector, the Board, and the Director of Revenue Settlement.

2. The Estate was purchased by Government in 1852. The Collector submits a comparative Statement showing the average cultivation during two periods of five years, prior and subsequent to the construction of the Kistna Anicut in 1856. The result of the improved irrigation appears to be a net increase in the latter period of acres 3,125 entirely in wet cultivation, and a further extension of wet cultivation on both wet and dry lands is anticipated. Taking the average rate per acre as Rupees 2-8-6, the Collector estimates the enhanced value of the estate consequent on this increase of cultivation at Rupees 7,910. Mr. Newill however shows that the real average wet assessment is Rupees 2-12-10, in which case the true increase in the value of the estate would be Rupees 8,756-8-2.

3. The Collector's proposal is to leave the original Peshkash, Rupees 23,991, unaltered, but to impose a water-rate on the irrigated land, and the Zamindár himself is said to have expressed a wish to the same effect. The Board oppose this plan, first, because Mr. Thornhill's results are based upon wrong premises; and secondly, because to adopt the old Peshkash would be "to ignore all the facts ascertained by the survey." Mere errors in calculation, the Government observe, might easily be rectified, but the force of the later objection must be acknowledged.

4. The rates proposed by Mr. Newill are stated to have been formed on principles described in a report which is still under the consideration of the Board, but the Board state their opinion that they are fair and reasonable. They average—

Rupees	1	12	5	per acre of Black Cotton soil.
"	0	13	4	" sandy soil.
"	1	9	8	" on the whole cultivated area.

The wet rates are the same with the addition of a 3 Rupees water cess.

5. The Revenue of the Estate settled in the Jamabandy of 1858-59 (1260) was Rupees 29,314; Mr. Newill's assessment on the same extent of land is Rupees 51,710. This large increase is ascribed to two causes. First, the wet rates have been raised from an average of Rupees 2-12-10 to an average of Rupees 4-9-8. Secondly, the survey areas are larger by 21 per cent. than those stated in the village accounts. In explanation of the former reason, Mr. Newill points out that the average wet assessment in the late District of Masulipatam, viz., Rupees 2-12-1, was "unwarrantably low," "the lowest in the whole Presidency." He also shows that an application of his rates to the average cultivation prior to the construction of the Anicut would have resulted in a demand less than the old Peshkash, and from this he argues that his assessment must really be the lighter of the two.

6. Having fixed the present value of the Estate at Rupees 51,710, Mr. Newill goes on to consider its future resources, and these he estimates at Rupees 68,828,† to be available in part as irrigation and cultivation extend, but not to be fully realized till they have been carried to the utmost possible limit. Finally, he proposes to assess the Estate on its present value with a Peshkash of Rupees 43,170.

† Vide note to paragraph 12 below.

7. Mr. Thornhill makes an allowance of 10 per cent. for collection charges, and Rupees 6-9-6 per cent. for the Zamindar's profits. The same rates are adopted by Mr. Newill without remark, but the Board doubt on what principle they can have been founded. The Zamindar's share was fixed by the Commission of 1802*

* See Report of the Commission, paragraph 13, under date 27th September 1802.

† See paragraph 45 of Report above quoted.

Government, and one-third for the Zamindar's share. The allowance now under trial elsewhere is 10 per cent. with the wet assessment on the average wet area, but the latter asset will not be available under Mr. Newill's scheme. The Board are of opinion that 10 per cent. alone would be insufficient, while on the other hand one-third is too much. In this opinion the Government concur. The fairest allowance, they consider, is one quarter, or 25 per cent.

8. Applying the proportion of two-thirds to Government to Mr. Newill's valuation, the Board show that the Peshkash would amount to Rupees 34,106 or 80,353, according as the undeveloped resources are omitted or included. If dry assessment be charged on the whole Estate, but the water rate limited to the area irrigable from existing works, two-thirds of the total would amount to Rupees 55,728, but this would exceed the assets at present available.

9. Finally, the Board propose a further reference to the Settlement and Public Works Departments, or, to avoid delay, they suggest an alternative that the Peshkash should be fixed at two-thirds of the dry assessment on existing cultivation plus the water charge on the area now irrigable. The Peshkash would then be Rupees 46,564, and the Zamindar's present share Rupees 5,146, or nearly 5 per cent.

10. The Government do not perceive the advantage of the proposed reference, nor how it would place them in a better position to decide than they are in at present. In the existing condition of the Estate it seems impracticable to impose a Peshkash, absolutely permanent, that shall be fair both to Government and to the Zamindar. Either it would have to be fixed at too high a figure for the latter to pay at first, or Government would have to forego all participation in the future profits to be derived from their own works. Under the circumstances the fairest plan seems to be to make the assessment on the present value of the Estate, and to levy an extra charge for all fresh lands irrigated at Government expense.

11. The present value of the Estate may be taken, as estimated by Mr. Newill, at Rupees 51,708. The Zamindar's allowance is to be one-quarter, as sanctioned above. His present share would then amount to Rupees 12,927 while the sum payable to Government would be Rupees 38,781.

12. Any future extension of irrigation will be a matter for adjustment, and Government will be entitled to 3 Rupees (less 10 per cent. for collection expenses) for every acre watered beyond the 8,817 acres now under wet cultivation. On the other hand, any increase of dry cultivation will go to swell the Zamindar's profits, and even where the cultivation is wet, the dry assessment will go into his own pocket, the Government demand being confined to the water cess. Thus supposing the whole area cultivated, his present share would be increased by the dry assessment on the 11,423 acres now waste, viz., Rupees 13,748,† and his maximum profits would be Rupees 26,675. Similarly the maximum receipts of Government would be Rupees 88,353.‡

‡ The Government presume that this is the actual assessment. This number of acres at the average rate would give Rupees 18,325.

	Rs.	Rs.
Present Peshkash	...	38,781
3 x 18,325 waste acres	.. 55,030	
Deduct 10 per cent.	.. 5,508	
		49,572
		88,353

13. If the Zamindar is wealthy and the ryots numerous and possessed of capital, the terms now sanctioned are less favorable than the permanent settlement proposed by the Board. But the large existing proportion of waste even on the area already irrigable appears to be due to a deficiency of population. If so, years may elapse before the whole area now irrigable is really brought under cultivation, and in the interval the Zamindar would be paying for what he could not actually enjoy.

14. One point yet remains for discussion, how is the extent of irrigation to be ascertained? The Government have already expressed their strong disinclination to any actual measurements

being made, but the arrangement now sanctioned, and no less so the proposal of the Board, will render them necessary until the Zamindar will consent to a reasonable lump assessment, or until some better plan can be devised. For the present however the local Officers will abstain from interference. The Peshkash now settled may stand until a perceptible increase is observed in the wet cultivation of the Estate, such as would make it advisable to revise it.

15. Meanwhile this question will receive full consideration in the Department of Public Works, to which the views of the Collector and District Engineer, that no other course is practicable, will be communicated. The papers under review do not state whether any Government villages receive water from the same sluices as this Estate. If not, His Excellency in Council is of opinion that the simplest plan would be to deliver at those sluices the water required by the Zamindar or his agents from week to week, and to exact payment at a rate to be determined on as equivalent to 3 Rupees per acre. The Zamindar and Ryots could then follow their discretion in using the water, and the Government would have a guarantee against waste. An allowance would of course have to be made for the 8,817 acres included in the fixed Peshkash. The Collector considers that the rapid deposits of silt would render any figures founded on a measurement, or series of measurements, of the depth and velocity of the channels, unworthy of reliance a few weeks later. The system, however, has been found to answer in Bengal, in the north of Italy and elsewhere, and it seems to be the best where large properties are concerned.

16. The Zamindar will be informed of the arrangement now sanctioned through the Collector. The Collector will take pains to explain the reasons of the large increase in the Peshkash, and he will report any remarks that the Zamindar may wish to be brought to the notice of Government. He will also impress upon him that his settlement with the ryots must be at Mr. Newill's rates both for land and water, and that there are to be no extra demands or exactions.

17. These Proceedings will be communicated to the Home Government in due course as soon as the Collector reports whether the Zamindar assents to the proposals of Government.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) P. P. HUTCHINS,

Acting Deputy Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

Department Public Works.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

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