M.R.O. 14 – 5,450—22-10-25.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 2911 Press ~~Mis.~~

634-635

Dated 26 – 10 — 1866.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,

26th October 1866.

No. 634. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Public Works Department:—

Passing orders on papers relating to the improvement of the Weyacondan channel in Trichinopoly, and requesting attention of the Revenue authorities to the subject that the various calingulahs and under-sluices are left entirely to the management of the Mirassidars, who without any intelligent acquaintance with the use of those works open or close them at their pleasure. } (Here enter 20th October 1866, No. 3,360.)

No. 635. ORDER THEREON, 26th October 1866, No. 2,911.

Miscellaneous.

Ordered to be recorded.

(True Extract.)

Secretary to Government.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

Read the following papers:—

No. 498. From the Superintending Engineer, 6th Division, to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Tanjore, 29th September 1866, No. 783.

1. I have the honor to reply to G. O. No. 595, dated 20th February, relative to the improvement of the Weyacondan channel.

2. There is no doubt that the greater length of the channel from the head to the head sluice, than the distance between the head and the fourth sandpoke by the river, tends to cause accumulations in the channel head, but this can in a great measure be remedied by straightening and improving the head, and the powerful under-sluices proposed by Colonel Greenaway were intended to form a sufficient scour to obviate this defect.

3. The cause of the present deplorable condition of the head is due to the fact that, instead of confining themselves to the proper head of the channel through which to draw their supply, the Merassidars have been permitted to take advantage of the set at any point below the channel mouth to open a second or even a third head; the result of which has been, first, that the set of the stream has been drawn away from the proper head to a point lower down the river, and accumulations have been formed in front of the proper head or mouth; and second, that the water after entering the channel at a point between the mouth and the head sluice has formed a back-water between the new and proper mouths, in which silt and sand has been deposited so as almost to block up that portion of the channel.

4. There is, no doubt, very great difficulty in regulating the set of the current in a large river like the Cauvery, and after every heavy fresh there is some little change in the set of the current, and this often from no apparent cause, and if, when provided with a large open mouth, it has not been found practicable to obtain sufficient draught during floods to maintain the set of the stream on the head of the channel, when the draught is materially decreased by the construction of a head sluice with one-twentieth of the water-way, it will be still less possible to command the set of the current, and it is on this account alone that I think the construction of a new head sluice at the mouth of the channel objectionable.

5. Were a head sluice constructed at the mouth of the channel, it would still be necessary to provide a surplus of some sort at the site of the old calingulah, to carry off the drainage brought down by the Nunga Voikal, which drains about eight square miles. The surplus here, however, would take the form of sluices, for the construction of a surplus, similar to that proposed by Colonel Greenaway, would not prevent the backing up of the waters of the Cauvery through the fourth sandpoke, and this it would be necessary to prevent.

The works required and their probable cost would be—

Head sluice	Rs. 5,000
Surplus sluice	,, 5,000
Embanking, clearing, and planting nanal between head sluices	,, 3,000

The cost of the under-sluices proposed by Colonel Greenaway and the clearing of the head would probably be—

Under-sluices	...Rs. 16,500
Clearing channel bed	... ,, 2,000
Closing sandpokes	... ,, 500

6. If the latter scheme is adopted, a very stringent order must be issued that the second and third sandpokes are on no account or under any circumstances to be opened; that if the current sets somewhat below the proper mouth, it must be coaxed back to the mouth by cutting a channel through the sand from the mouth to the deep stream of the river, and by forming a corumboo across the deep stream when the water is low, so as to divert the water on to the head.

7. Colonel Greenaway has suggested the formation of a rough stone corumboo at the head of the channel, as such a work has proved very effective at the head of the Nellore tank supply channel, "the anticipated result being "that a large body of water being forced through the supply channel, and finding "its escape at the low level of the under-sluices the said channel will be necessarily "scoured out," and he estimates the cost at Rupees 4,000. I do not, however, adopt Colonel Greenaway's views on this subject, and am of opinion that the construction of a rough stone corumboo is objectionable for the following reasons: First, it would be very costly, constantly requiring renewal or repair; second, unless provided with sandpokes, it would tend to raise the bed of the river and eventually to divert the set of the current to the north side of the river, leaving a shoal at the head of the Weyacondan channel; and third, if sandpokes were provided, it would probably be difficult to close them, as an earthen or puddle bank would not stand on a rough stone base through which water was percolating.

8. Something must be done to this head during the approaching working season, and I would therefore solicit early orders on the subject. Though it may not be possible actually to commence operations in 1866-67, materials in large quantities must be prepared before the 31st March, and I would request that at least Rupees 5,000 may be placed at my disposal for the preparation of materials in 1866-67.

9. From the section it will be observed that the floor of the head sluice is six feet three inches below the level of the deep bed of the Cauvery at the mouth of the channel, nearly two miles above the head sluice, this accounts in a great measure for the silting up of the channel bed below the head sluice, and leads to erroneous ideas of the state of the channel, thus Mr. Vans Agnew, in his letter to the Revenue Board, while expatiating on the defects of the channel, states that though the water stood at eight feet on the gauge at the head sluice, it was not up to the middle of a man standing in the channel bed below the sluice. The statement, as it stands, is very startling, and doubtless the Board has addressed Government on the subject, but when the levels are considered, and it is borne in mind that the sill of the sluice is six feet three inches below the level of the river bed, and that eight feet above the sill represents one foot nine inches or two feet in the deep bed of the river, it is not surprising that Mr. Comyn's man was not drowned.

Paragraph 6, No. 196, dated 22nd September.

10. As Mr. Vans Agnew's statements are founded upon a misconception, and he has had the experience of some ten or fifteen days in the District, I deem it unnecessary to follow him through his letter, but think it sufficient to state, first, that with one foot nine inches or two feet of water at the channel head, water cannot be expected to reach Trichinopoly unless the intermediate sluices are closed, and the supply to the various lands is regulated by turns; second, that the lands at the tail of the channel depend upon tanks supplied two or three times when the rivers are in flood; third, that if the head is improved between the mouth and the present head sluice, and about Rupees 2,000 is spent in clearing the channel east of the point to which the clearing executed this season extended, the channel will be in very good order, and if the works constructed for the regulation of the channel are used instead of being neglected, or even abused, the channel will remain in good order; but if it is supposed that any regulating works at the head will admit of the channel receiving a large and permanent supply of water when the rivers are low, without the formation of a corumboo, such an idea must at once be abandoned, and it must be borne in mind that a corumboo in such a locality must be formed in one or two days, by the employment of 2,000 coolies at a time, and that it is simply useless trying to form a corumboo with two or three hundred men, and that when the necessity for forming a corumboo arises it must be constructed promptly, while the necessity for its formation is no criterion of the defective condition of the channel.

No. 499. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 26th September 1866.

Read the following letter from the Acting Collector of Trichinopoly, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Trichinopoly, 22nd September 1866 No. 196.

1. I have the honor to direct the serious attention of the Board to the Proceedings of Government, Public Works Department, dated the 20th February last, No. 595, and to the few following remarks upon the subject thereof, which, notwithstanding my temporary connection with this District, I feel it to be my duty to submit.

2. In their Order which closed the above Proceedings, Government declined to sanction an estimate for Rupees 16,500 submitted and recommended by the Board for immediate execution, for constructing an under-sluice in the Weyacondan channel.

3. In paragraph 1 Government stated that there were no funds available for the work during the "current year;" meaning, I presume, the official year that closed with last March, and that, therefore, a re-consideration of the subject would cause no additional delay. In paragraph 3 the Superintending Engineer was directed to re-consider the question.

4. I hardly think I shall be going too far if I opine that practically the effect of this Order is the indefinite postponement of a pressingly important matter.

5. At this moment, with upwards of a lac of Rupees revenue at stake, the condition of this channel is so defective, that there is every probability of an immediate loss to the Government in the shape of obligatory remissions of, according to the best information I have been able to collect, fully half that sum, and until some effectual step is taken, Government must be prepared to face the pro-

bability of some such heavy annual loss. In fact the channel is silting up so rapidly, that if nothing is done, there will soon be no flow at all through it, and the whole revenue will be lost.

6. In a note just received from the spot from Mr. Comyn, he says, "the "whole place is silted up;" again "near the head sluice the silt is very high. The "water has reached the height of eight feet as per the wall measurement close to the "sluice. I sent a fellow down to see the actual depth, and the water was not up to "his middle even." Not in the highest fresh this season has any water reached further than seven miles below the town of Trichinopoly, while villages for twenty miles are dependent upon it. For the seven miles the supply has been quite insufficient. From the first hour of my arrival I have been beseiged by the despairing Ryots. For two weeks past, since the freshes began to fall, every exertion has been made in throwing out a large corumboo. The operation is like making bricks without straw, for, from the Padoogays not having been flooded this season, there is scarcely any growth upon them, and consequently materials are wanting, and are only obtainable from a distance and with great difficulty.

7. My Head Assistant is on the spot risking his health by constant exposure to the sun in this hot weather, and to the detriment of his ordinary duties. The Tahsildar's whole time is occupied in superintending the work, all but the routine duties of his office being left in abeyance, and, after all, the result of these exertions is quite inadequate to the requirements of the cultivation above Trichinopoly. Mr. Comyn writes triumphantly at having raised the water in the channel yesterday eight inches higher than the day before. It did not reach to within two miles of this town, and the man I despatched some hours ago to ascertain how far it did actually come has not yet returned, so I presume he has had a considerable distance to travel to find it. Then I have the satisfaction of being assured, that the pressure of a very little more water would destroy the whole corumboo, and leave us to re-construct it without materials.

8. We are now close upon October, the working season begins in December. There is no project. There is therefore every prospect of the approaching working season being lost, and Government thus losing another lac or half a lac of Rupees *next* Fusly. I do not think the money requisite to carry out any project that may be determined upon need be a difficulty. The Merassidars interested would be only too glad to have the opportunity of advancing it, on promise of re-payment whenever the allotment might be made in due course.

9. I think I have given sufficient reasons to justify the Board in again pressing Government to take immediate action in this matter.

10. It is a serious matter in these hard times to allow the highly productive power of a large tract of country to be seriously impaired, where the provision of the comparatively trifling necessary funds to restore the same need be no obstacle, and where nothing is wanting but a project, and permission to execute it.

Ordered to be submitted for the immediate consideration of Government as an emergent matter.

Transferred to the Public Works Department.

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

2nd October 1866.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
20th October 1866.

No. 500. ORDER THEREON, 20th October 1866, No. 3,360.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 97.

1. With his letter of the 27th November 1865, No. 257, the Collector of Trichinopoly forwarded to the Board of Revenue reports from the Superintending Engineer of the 6th Division and the Executive Engineer in charge of the Trichinopoly Range on the unsatisfactory state of the Weyacondan channel owing to its great tendency to silt, and at the same time submitted estimates amounting to Rupees 16,500, prepared by the latter Officer, for the remedial measures which he considered would most readily and certainly effect an improvement. These consisted in the substitution of powerful under-sluices for the calingulah immediately adjoining the head sluice, and the closing, when that work is completed, of the two westerly sandpokes.

2. The Government did not feel satisfied that the proposed under-sluices would have sufficient power, situated as they would be at a point where the level of the water in the channel with the head sluice open, would not be higher than that in the river, and as no funds were at the time available, the Superintending Engineer of the 6th Division was requested to re-consider whether it would not be better to move the head sluice to a position near the present mouth of the channel.

3. Captain Oakes now replies to this proposal, and, though agreeing that the greater length of the channel from its head to the site of i[illegible] the distance by the river between its head and the calingulah which it is proposed to convert into a scouring sluice would neutralize the action of the latter, he considers that this defect may in a great measure be remedied by straightening and improving the head. This the Government still think questionable, but they have no doubt that a sluice will be a great improvement upon the present dilapidated calingulah, and they accordingly sanction the estimate of Rupees 16,500 for the proposed conversion.

4. It is very difficult to keep clear of silt any channel which, taken off from a river on the same level as its bed, follows a tortuous course on a diminished slope and receives into it numerous drainages. The utmost that can be done is by a judicious and well-timed management of the various means which have been provided for creating a scour, and carrying off deposit, to prevent as much as possible the accumulation of the latter; but, from Colonel Greenaway's and the Superintending Engineer's letters, it would appear that instead of the various calingulahs and under-sluices being worked in such a manner as to produce the best results, they have been left entirely to the management of the Merassidars who, without any intelligent acquaintance with the uses of those works, have been permitted to open or close them at their pleasure. The attention of the Revenue authorities should be given to this subject.

5. Dependent as the Weyacondan channel is, from its construction, entirely on the freshes of the Cauvery in the absence of local rain, a short supply to it was clearly unavoidable in a year like the present when the rains totally failed for so many months, and the freshes in the river, though pretty continuous, have been of moderate height. In attributing then solely to neglect the cause of the inefficiency of the channel to provide water this season to as large an area of cultivation under it

as in ordinary years, the Acting Collector ignores the peculiar circumstances of the channel, and seems to have been led, by a misconception of the relative level of its bed and the sill of its head sluice, into imagining that the cause of the short supply was solely owing to accumulations of deposit. This the Superintending Engineer clearly shows to be an error, and the Government trust that with the measures that will now be taken for improving the work, its usefulness will be maintained and perhaps increased.

6. The Government quite agree with the Superintending Engineer in his remarks regarding corumboos, and though it is impossible that the channel can receive a proper supply of water when the river is low without the construction of a corumboo, that work must be of a temporary character and not of such substantial form as permanently to act upon the stream of the river and cause changes which might lead to the most dangerous results.

7. Measures may be at once taken for collecting such materials as may be required to prepare for carrying out the estimate now sanctioned early next year, if the Superintending Engineer can provide the funds from savings on any of his current allotments.

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

To the Superintending Engineer, 6th Division.
,, Accountant General.
,, Controller of Public Works Accounts.
,, Board of Revenue.
,, Revenue Department.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

Rev - 1866 - No 3746 Dept.
Pro: of Govt for Octobr

Proceedings in the
P. W. Dept.

Dated 20th Octr
Received 23rd " 1866.
No. 3360.

RECORDED.
No. 2911.
26 Octr 1866

Passing orders on papers relating to the improvement of the Weyacoudam channel in Yuchimpaly, and requesting attention of the Revenue authorities to the subject that the various caluiglahs Boinder-sluices are left entirely to the management of the Nirassedars who without any intelligent

* acquaintance with the use of these works open or close them at their pleasure. *

A. 634 & 635