

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	L 29.	Press ~~Mis.~~
309-310 Dated	15-2-18 68.	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
15th February 1863.*

No. 309. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 6th February 1863.

Read the following letter from the Collector of Madras, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Sydapet, 1st February 1863, No. 40:—

* To be returned.
From Executive Engineer, East Coast Canal, dated 30th January 1863, No. 221.
From Deputy Collector, Salt, Madras, dated 31st January 1863, No. 20.

1. I send herewith, to save time, the originals* of certain letters just received from Mr. Smith and Mr. Fraser, Civil Engineer, and request the Board's opinion on the subject, and their sanction of the expenditure of 3,500 Rupees if they approve of Mr. Smith's scheme.

2. I fancy Mr. Fraser's opinion on a subject like the present is more likely to be of value than Mr. Smith's, and if the Board think so also, they will doubtless disapprove of spending so much money on a mere experiment, and will conclude to leave the Ennore bar as it is.

3. In this case the only alternative way to ensure a supply of salt will be to manufacture as much as is possible in the southern pans, and I have, therefore, as a commencement, authorized the manufacture of the quantity recommended by Mr. Smith in his letter of the 20th January last, No. 4, forwarded with my letter of the 22nd idem, No. 21, at Samanjeri and Covelong.

4. I have also asked Mr. Smith to send in at once an estimate of the quantity of salt that could be manufactured in the south this season, supposing that we find that little or none is likely to be made in the north.

From the Executive Engineer, East Coast Canal to the Collector of Madras, dated Madras, 30th January 1863, No. 221.

1. I have the honour to inform you that in consequence of an urgent request by the Deputy Collector in the Salt Department, I made another attempt to open the Ennore bar on Sunday and Monday last.

The Lock Gamastah reported on Sunday that a small fresh had come down the Cortilliar and had raised the Ennore backwater a few inches. About 250 coolies were employed all day on Sunday, and on Monday the number was increased to 500. They succeeded in opening the bar and establishing a feeble current out to sea; but the mouth of the channel was closed by the action of the waves almost as soon as it was opened.

Coolies were then put on to keep the mouth open by constant digging, and 150 of them worked all night until 4 o'clock on Tuesday morning, when they desisted, as, in spite of their labours, the sea kept the mouth of the channel shut.

An attempt to open the bar was made simply on the chance that we might succeed, and to satisfy the Deputy Collector that everything was done that could be done; at the same time, I had but little hope of success, as the difference of level between the backwater and the sea was not sufficient to create a current strong enough to resist the action of the surf.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
15th February 1868.*

From the Deputy Collector in charge of Salt, to the Collector of Madras, dated on circuit at Vullur, 31st January 1868, No. 20.

1. I regret to inform you that our prospect of obtaining salt from the northern pans during the current season is gloomy in the extreme.

2. Owing to a deficiency in the fall of rain, the Ennore bar, which usually opens during the monsoon, remains closed to this day. The consequence is, that there is no communication between the canal and the sea, and the rain which fell on the 24th and 25th instant, added to the flood which poured in from the Cortilliar, has so diluted the water in the canal as to deprive it of its saline properties. In one word, the canal water from the Cortilliar northwards is, for the present, unfit for the manufacture of salt, as will be seen from the accompanying samples which I beg to submit for your examination.

3. On the 25th instant, I wrote to Mr. Fraser reminding him of the fall of rain during the previous day and night, and earnestly begging him to make an effort to open the bar. He accordingly sent his Overseer and some Coolies, but their attempts proved ineffectual, as the waves drove into the cuttings and made twice as much sand as was removed from them.

4. This being the state of matters, the ryots have, for the present, stopped all work, the Coolies have dispersed or are dispersing to different parts of the District in search of labour, and it will be difficult to collect them again when required for the manufacture of salt later in the season.

5. The Superintendents of Vullur and Attiput, who were present when the attempt to open the bar was made on the 26th instant, are of opinion that another effort, longer continued and more vigorously conducted, might be successful, and they strongly recommend its being made.

6. This recommendation I beg to support; our present urgent want is salt-water, and this can only be obtained by connecting the canal with the sea. Two reasons commend themselves in favour of the measure; it might be successful; and the chief obstacle to manufacture will in that event be removed. It will have the effect of keeping the Coolies from dispersing in search of labour, and will at the same time enable them to earn on the spot the means of subsistence. In fact, it might be appropriately included among the relief works, and its cost disbursed from the Relief Fund sanctioned for this District.

7. I am unable to say how much the work will cost; but if the sum of Rupees 3,500 be placed at my disposal from the Relief Fund, I will undertake to see that every pie disbursed is fairly earned, and that the Government are not cheated. Even if the work should be unsuccessful, the expenditure of the above sum would not be money absolutely thrown away, since it will secure one of the objects in view by affording relief to the poorer classes in a season of distress; but if successful, the money would be but a drop in the bucket compared with the gain which it will ensure to Government, and the means of livelihood it will afford to thousands of salt labourers.

8. Looking to the small prospect of our obtaining our usual quantity of salt from the northern pans, it occurs to me that it would be well to encourage manufacture in the south, and I would now suggest that permission be granted to the ryots of Covelong and Samanjeri to make the quantity of salt proposed in my letter of the 20th instant, No. 4. The salt thus obtained might be stored in Home's Garden Depot, and help in some measure to meet the demand on the Madras Cotaur.

9. I beg earnestly to solicit that this letter may be disposed of one way or the other with the least practicable delay.

1. The Board have been in personal communication with Colonel Boileau and Mr. Fraser on the subject of the foregoing letter. They are decidedly of opinion that another attempt should be made to open the bar at Ennore, and they resolve to authorize Mr. Fraser to incur an expenditure, not exceeding Rupees 500 for this purpose, in anticipation of the sanction of Government, which will be requested.

2. The charge can be met from the general savings out of the provision made under the head of Salt in the current year's Budget.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
15th February 1868.*

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No. 310.

ORDER THEREON, 15th February 1868, No. 429.

Separate Revenue, No. 8.
Salt.

Sanctioned as requested by the Board, who will report the result of the attempt to open the bar, and inform Government what stock of salt is now on hand at the Madras Kotars.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,

Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
.. the Department Public Works.
.. the Accountant General.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

