M.R.O. 14—18,000—27-8-34

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 606 Press ~~Mis.~~

99-100
Dated 7-3-1868.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 7th March 1868.

No. 99. Read the following letter from Major F. APPLEGATH, Madras Staff Corps, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort St. George, dated Vizianagrum, 24th February 1868:—

1. I have the honor to report that I accompanied Mr. Oldham to Juggiahpetah, and now proceed to describe, in detail, the result of the inquiry.

2. In my letter to Government, dated 6th January last, I foresaw that some expenditure in actual operations would be necessary to enable me to prove my anticipations by actually uncovering the coal. The Government Order, No. 261, dated 17th January 1868, sanctions only such expenditure as would be necessary to place before Professor Oldham the evidence of the existence of coal; this I have been unable to do, as Mr. Oldham thought nothing more necessary than a cursory inspection he has reported, and the consequence is that no pits were sunk, or trenches to any sufficient extent carried out.

3. Considering the extent of ground to be inspected within the limits of the geological basin, being nearly 50 square-miles, it was not sufficient that only a few hours were devoted to a very important portion of it near the village of Vadadry, where a burnt out-crop of shale (coal?) was shewn Mr. Oldham, who then stated his opinion that it was burnt "shale" which had been ignited by the red hot iron ore, but he makes no mention of this burnt out-crop in his report. I think it was certainly very desirable that at least some effort should have been made to trace this out-crop, and ascertain beyond any conjecture whether coal, which almost invariably accompanies carbonaceous or bituminous shale, was there or not. I repeat that such an important indication of coal should have been throughly investigated on the spot, instead of which the camp was removed across the Kistna to Caiutapilly, where the inquiry appears to have been concluded.

4. I would beg to remind the Government that in one of Professor Oldham's former letters, paragraph 4 of No. 519, dated 9th January 1867, see Proceedings of Government, 2nd February 1867, Professor Oldham states that it is unlikely that coal can exist in any quantity without its shewing itself on the surface, and he also mentions that burnt out-crops of shale or coal are easily distinguished; and when one is pointed out to him on the Kistna, he totally ignores it in his report to Government.

5. In the Raniganj and Cuttack districts similar burnt out-crops are met with in the Damoodah or coal-bearing rocks, and are there accepted as unmistakeable evidence of the existence of coal; then why should such favorable indications of coal on the Kistna be treated with silence?

6. Professor Oldham having sent me a copy of his report, and as my name is so frequently introduced in it, I hope the Government will accept my excuses for troubling them further on this subject. First of all I complain of the very hurried manner in which the localities all around Juggialpettah were visited, and altogether the very short time allowed to review the whole of the rocks contained in the 50 square-miles of country to be inspected; and I am not surprised that as they would not wait even a few days to see the red shale rocks opened on the Palair, or the burnt out-crop of shale or coal at Vadadry excavated, that no satisfactory result from the Geological report could be anticipated.

7. I adhere to my assertion that I have actually quarried and found coal in large quantities on this spot, as much as eight or ten tons. Coal at that time could not be procured at that place for less than Rs. [illegible] per ton, and I only dispose of the insinuation that the coal was placed there for the purpose by the aver that I myself conducted and saw the operations, in the [illegible] evidence of the Rajah of Mookteala and his [illegible] Mahomed Khan, Engineer's department, Bezwada, who were present at that time. I wish I had the means of appealing to the Sappers and Miners whom I employed, and I respectfully submit that research should be made with a view to discoveries so valuable to India ought not to be stoutly met by suppositions not only so unfounded, but throwing direct doubt on an Officer's [illegible] veracity.

8. It may not be out of place here to mention further that a large portion of the coal which I had quarried was deposited by me in the [illegible] 1851, in the Government Museum at Madras. This shows that it was more readily exposed by me to scientific inspection. I left India for England that year, and reported my discovery to the Court of Directors, and on my return to Madras in 1854 I went to the Museum, and could not find a vestige of the coal. I heard afterwards that it had been thrown away.

9. It now rests with Government to decide what further steps are to be taken on this important subject, and whether Mr. Oldham's advice, that not another rupee should be spent in the search for coal, should be adopted? I however feel quite certain that the coal will eventually be found, and trust that my repeated efforts and assertions may then be remembered.

No. 169. Order thereon, 7th March 1858, No. 1681.

Miscellaneous. Ordered to be recorded.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) F. BRANDT,
Under Secretary to Government.

To Major F. Applegarth.
,, the Board of Revenue.

Encl. S. T. Augustin

This letter may, I think, be recorded with reference to the draft letter of Government on Professor Oldham's report now in circulation.

[illegible]

[illegible] RECORDED.

Miscellaneous.

To Major F. Applegath.
,, the Board of Revenue.

Ead. S. T. Augustin

Rec'd 1868, Mch 2nd
No of Letter
No. 675.

From
Major Applegath
Madras Staff
Corps

Dated 24th Feby 68
Received 2nd March
1868

From Do 12 March/68
No 860

Reporting the result
of his Efforts in
search of Fossil in the
Kurnul District

RECORDED.