M.R.O. 1—39,000—16-10-29.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 1902	Press Mis.
36-37	
Dated 31 July	1969

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 3rd July 1869.

No. 36. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 7th June 1869, No. 4,060:—

Read the following letter from the Collector of Nellore, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 26th February 1869, No. 398.

I HAVE taken the opportunity of reporting on the Nellore Agricultural Show to bring forward the question of pasturage which is so closely connected with stock, and I now do myself the honor to submit, for the Board's consideration, such further information as will, I trust, enable them to pass final orders at an early date on an important subject.

2. When I went out into the district at the beginning of last month, I collected detailed information as to the rates at which our pasturage has been let for the current year. And these details I would enclose for the Board's consideration if it were in my power to send also correct values of the land let. It is, however, only by personal knowledge in the present state of the settlement, that the rates obtained at auction can be compared with what the land is really worth. For instance, when I see in the Rapur Talook that Tegacherla has 15,000 acres of first-rate pasturage and pays only 7 Pies per acre, Akilavalasa 6000 acres and pays 3 Pies, Dasuru 6,000 acres at 6 Pies, Tirumalapad 2,000 acres at 5 Annas, and Chellatur 1,000 acres at 9 Annas per acre, I know that these variations are not determined by the value of the land; but the fact *must rest on my assertion*, and no *returns* that I can make will convey this information to the Board. It is the same, when I take up the question in other talooks. In Kavali, a rich and populous coast talook, with strong village communities, I find Jaladanki getting 3,000 acres of fair pasturage at the edge of a sheet of rice cultivation at 2 Pies per acre. Whilst elsewhere in the same talook, where other causes have proved more powerful, the rates have been run up to sums that have nothing to do with the value of the land. And I must ask the Board to take thus on my simple assertion the fact that letting the pasturage by auction has produced variations in the rates at which our pasturage has been let that have nothing to do with the value of the land.

3. The village of Chejerla, to which I refer in my report on the Show, has been let this year at Annas 4-3 per acre. But there is nothing to prevent its being run up again next year to 15 Annas per acre or higher. Those who engage in breeding stock, are thus exposed to fluctuations that no amount of prizes, no number of Agricultural Shows, can possibly balance. And knowing the interest that the Board and Government take in the arrangements for breeding stock, and the importance they attach to all that affects the security of those whose capital is so engaged, I am issuing instructions to stay the collection, pending further orders, of all rates in excess of the general average I would propose when the villagers are the renters.

4. I enclose an abstract showing the average rates at which the pasturage has been let in the differeant talooks. I show also the rate at which I would recommend that the pasturage should be let. This rate I have fixed in consultation with my Sheristadar and some of the Tahsildars whom I took the opportunity of consulting when they were in here for the Show. And in issuing orders to stay the collection of excessive rates, I will give the proposed rate of 2 Annas as the maximum to be collected for the present from villagers.

5. On the 4th of this month, two years ago, I recommended that the pasturage should be offered to the villagers at the general rates fixed for the talook, and put up to auction should they refuse to take it at that rate.

6. The Board in their Proceedings of the 2nd September 1867, observed that my plan seemed somewhat cumbersome, and the fair value of the pasturage was more likely to be realised by an auction than a fixed charge per acre.

7. The correctness of the Board's anticipation in respect to a fair value being realised, the results of the system ordered show only too clearly. In no instance probably has a true value been realised, in too many false values have gone far to do irreparable injury.

8. And I think that the plan proposed by me, the Board will find on re-consideration, is not so cumbersome as they at first thought. It is simply giving the villagers what is asserted to be their right in respect to the comparatively small areas required for occupation at the ordinary rates of assessment.

9. In fact, from the experience of the last two years, I now wish to go a step beyond the proposals that I made in 1867. I beg to recommend, first, that in every case the pasturage shall be offered to the villagers at the general rate fixed for the talook, and, secondly, when the villagers cannot agree among themselves and an auction is requisite under ordinary circumstances, the Tahsildar shall be empowered as regards pasturage to stay proceedings, and the Officer in charge of the division shall be empowered, should he think fit, to apportion the pasturage at the general rate with reference to the stock held by the several parties bidding for it, such apportionment being by survey divisions (Kandams) or Sub-divisions of 50 acres or upwards.

10. In a large village, unity of action is difficult. And were the further provisions I recommend not to be allowed, it would be easy for the influences now at work to embarrass the system and bring on an auction whenever it might be wished. And that such operations would be common, the opportunity thus given for living at the expense of others makes more than probable. The mere fact of a provision having been made would go far, however, to prevent such attempts. And I have thus no hesitation in advocating a condition that would be of great importance as regards breeding stock; but I do not by any means regard as equally necessary, when the occupation of land at the ordinary rates of assessment is the question at issue.

11. I do not propose to go into the causes at work in each instance, where the rates have been unduly raised, for such inquiry would be of little use.

12. Adopting the measures I recommend, namely, staying the collections this year where the rates are excessive, and letting the land to the villagers next year at fixed rates, the following would be approximately the financial result:—For the current year a revenue on the pasture farm of Rupees 29,000 or Rupees 1-3-0 per acre for the district generally, and for next year, and such further period as the Board may determine that the lease should run, Rupees 51,000.

13. And in recommending that five years be taken as the period for which the pasturage shall be let, I would recommend that it should be so let subject to any changes in area that may from time to time be necessary at the discretion of the Collector or other Officer in charge of the division, to meet the requirements of conservancy or of those desirous of occupying the land at the ordinary rates of assessment.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
3rd July 1869.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

ABSTRACT STATEMENT showing the total area held as pasturage in the District of Nellore in 1868-69, classed with reference to rates, the number of villages in which held, the total rent paid, average rate per acre, and rate recommended.

Names of Talooks.	Up to 1 Anna.			Up to 2 Annas.			Above 2 Annas.			Total.			Average rate per Acre.	Rates proposed.
	No. of villages.	Area.	Rent.	No. of villages.	Area.	Rent.	No. of villages.	Area.	Rent.	No. of villages.	Area.	Rent.		
		Acs.	Rs.		Acs.	Rs.		Acs.	Rs.		Acs.	Rs.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Gudur ...	15	44,401	1,231	25	29,062	2,568	15	6,320	1,259	55	79,783	5,058	0 1 0	0 2 0
Rapur ...	13	55,437	2,479	21	36,566	4,507	20	10,819	2,361	54	1,02,822	9,347	0 1 4	
Nellore ...	...	.....	.....	3	1,752	181	6	2,231	502	9	3,983	683	0 2 9	
Atmakur ...	32	19,667	936	20	27,763	2,639	16	9,547	2,231	77	56,977	5,826	0 1 8	
Kavali ..	30	55,605	2,083	14	22,460	867	3	1,487	221	47	79,552	3,176	0 0 8	
Udayagiri ...	8	8,995	440	26	27,666	2,453	16	16,854	3,267	50	53,515	6,160	0 1 10	
Kandukur ...	12	19,314	915	17	4,473	493	21	2,367	1,122	50	26,184	2,530	0 1 7	
Ongole ...	10	3,567	164	11	6,987	601	2	207	70	23	10,761	835	0 1 3	
	120	2,07,016	8,273	146	1,56,729	14,309	99	49,832	11,033	365	4,13,577	33,615	0 1 4	...

(Signed) J. W. B. DYKES,
Collector.

NELLORE,
26th February 1869.

14. I have reduced the rates I proposed for the coast talooks in my former letter on this subject, as the absence of wood in the opinion of the Tahsildars fully balances the greater value of the land from its proximity to markets.

15. And adopting one uniform rate of 2 Annas, I will instruct the Officers now making the Jummahbundy to ascertain in how many cases the villagers are prepared to take their pasturage at that rate.

16. The loss of revenue as shown marginally, I need scarcely add, is a matter of figures. The average revenue given up includes the cattle tax as well as rents on pasture farms. And the proposed rents under the latter head being about double what was previously so raised, the apparent loss under the former head must be compared with the present increase in the land assessment to obtain true results.

Years.	Pullary and pasture Farms from 1862-63 to 1866-67.
	RS.
1862-63.....	93,814
1863-64	93,682
1864-65.....	87,811
1865-66.....	86,200
1866-67.....	66,129
Average.....	85,327
Pasture Rents.	
1867-68.....	24,152
1868-69.....	33,615

In a letter dated 4th February 1867, No. 60, submitted to Government with Board's Proceedings, dated 2nd September 1867, No. 5,688, Mr. Dykes requested permission to abolish the Pullary tax in the talooks of Nellore and Atmakur, proposing as a temporary substitute (till the general introduction of the new assessment) that all land not demarcated and surveyed in detail for occupation, should be let as pasture for a term of two years, at an upset price of 2 Annas an acre in the western talooks, and 4 Annas in the coast talooks. The land was to be offered, first, to the villagers at those upset prices, and, if refused by them, to the highest bidder, without further reference to an upset price, or the village to which the bidder might belong.

2. The Board reviewed all the circumstances of the case, and recommended that the proposal to abolish the Pullary tax should be sanctioned. They did not, however, approve of the arrangement proposed by Mr. Dykes in substitution.

3. Government in their Order of 13th November 1867, No. 2,676, endorsed the views of the Board, and in accordance with the recommendation contained in paragraph 4 of the Board's Proceedings, it was ruled that the Pullary tax should be at once abolished, and that after reserving out of the waste land an extent equal to 30 per cent. of the land occupied for cultivation, the remainder should be rented for pasture to the highest bidder.

4. The object of Mr. Dykes's present letter is to show that this system has led to the rental of lands for sums in some cases much above, and in others far below, their real value, and he again urges the adoption of his scheme of having a fixed rate.

5. He has, in the meantime, stopped the collection of all rent at a rate higher than that previously proposed by him.

6. He submits a Statement showing the average rates at which the pasturage has been let in the different talooks, and the rate at which the Collector would recommend its rental.

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7. Without going into the arguments advanced by Mr. Dykes, the Board must observe that after the issue of the Order of Government above quoted, it ceased to be competent for the Collector to interfere with the rates at which land was to be rented under those orders.

8. The amount obtained under the system approved by Government is not a matter of present concern, as the system has only been in force two years, and though the rents may in some cases have been low, and in others high, that is simply the affair of the renter.

9. It was never to be expected that the rates obtained under the system of letting to the highest bidder would be uniform, and the Board are still of opinion that the average value of the pasture land throughout the district will be more adequately represented under that system than under any other.

10. The Board consider that Mr. Dykes has exceeded his authority in staying the collections of the higher rates, and he is therefore directed at once to resume this collection, and to cease from interference pending further Orders from Government.

No. 37. ORDER THEREON, 3rd July 1869, No. 1,902.

Land Revenue.

THE Government concur in the views of the Board of Revenue as expressed in the foregoing Proceedings.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) R. A. DALYELL,

Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

Exd. E. C. Shunker.

Nº 1902 Revenue Department.

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Under date the 3d July 1869

Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue

Informing Collector of Nellore District that he ought not to have stopped collections of higher rates of rent on pasture land, & directing to resume their collections. } R. 7th June 1869. Nº 2060

The Government concur in the views of the Board of Revenue as expressed in the foregoing Proceedings

16 Copies sent to Revenue Department

G. E. Doll

Secretary

Reference to England
Dated 3rd July 1869