M.R. G. 1—39,000—16-10-29.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 316 Press / Mis.

109-110

Dated 5th February 1869

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government. Revenue Department, 5th February 1869.

No. 109. Read the following letter from W. S. WHITESIDE, Esq., Madras Civil Service, to the Acting Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Madras, dated Tanjore, 19th November 1868:—

1. I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of the Proceedings of Government, dated 24th September 1868, No. 379, forwarding, for such observations as I might desire to offer, a letter, dated 20th July 1868, from Mr. Reade, Collector of South Arcot, to the address of the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, giving cover to two communications from his Sub-Collector, Mr. Hathaway, on the subject of the dwarf iron ploughs that were supplied in 1866 for the use of certain ryots of the Sub-division of that District, and to submit the following remarks for the consideration of His Excellency the Governor in Council.

2. Mr. Hathaway, in the letters which formed the enclosures to that of Mr. Reade, recommended very strongly that the iron ploughs in question should be received back again by Government from the purchasers, and the cost refunded to them, on the grounds, first, that ploughs of that description were utterly unsuited for agricultural purposes in this country; and, second, that the ryots never really wanted the ploughs, and had only been induced to express their willingness to purchase, because "a certain amount of pressure had been put upon them" to that end: and Mr. Reade, in transmitting Mr. Hathaway's letters, supported his recommendations, and at the same time brought prominently to the notice of the Revenue Board that "the ploughs, which had been so anxiously sought by the late Sub-Collector, "Mr. Whiteside, were never brought into use during that officer's tenure of office;" and that "the fact that the ploughs, till recently, had never been used, and the "opinion of the Sub-Collector that a certain amount of pressure was put on the "ryots, in order to obtain their willingness to buy them, is certainly in contrast with "the eagerness evinced by his predecessor, Mr. Whiteside, in having them made up "and sent for distribution."

3. The obvious inference to be drawn from these remarks of Mr. Reade's, if they mean anything, is that I, while Sub-Collector of South Arcot, either desiring to procure for myself a spurious reputation of being a zealous and good Revenue Officer, or for some other private motive improperly made use of my official authority to extort from the ryots of my Sub-division unwilling applications for agricultural implements that were unsuited to their requirements, and which, when they were received, could not be made use of by the applicants; and further that, when they were eventually sent from Madras for distribution, my interest in the matter suddenly vanished, and during the remainder of my tenure of office as Sub-Collector I negligently omitted to make any use of the ploughs, to obtain which I had professed so great anxiety.

4. I will now briefly draw the attention of Government to the correspondence which passed on the subject of these ploughs, and which I feel confident will convince His Excellency in Council that Mr. Reade has cast upon my official character an imputation not only unfair to me, his late subordinate, but also incorrect, inasmuch as it is opposed to the real facts of the case, as evinced by letters that were in his own office at the time when he so addressed the Board of Revenue.

5. On the 8th April 1865, Mr. Reade published a notification in the *District Gazette*, calling for written applications from ryots and other land-holders for the

iron ploughs which Government were desirous of seeing introduced into the various Districts, and which, if applied for within one year from the date of that notice, would, he stated, be supplied at certain reduced rates then specified; and he directed that applications for the ploughs should be submitted through the European Officers in charge of Divisions. On the 20th idem, I issued a Circular Takid to the Tahsildars of the Sub-division, desiring them to communicate the purport of the Collector's notification to the chief ryots and the Merassidars in their Talooks, and to report to me if any person desired to purchase one of the new ploughs.

6. On the 26th idem, I addressed to Mr. Reade my letter, No. 286, requesting, with reference to his notice in the *Gazette*, to be furnished with specific information as to the nature of the plough, its size, whether it was more suited for dry or wet cultivation, &c., &c., and Mr. Reade in his letter, No. 396, dated 29th idem, informed me in reply that the iron plough was specially adapted to the requirements of improved cultivation in this country, and was intended for bullock draught. This information I at once communicated to the ryots of the Sub-division, through the Tahsildars, but knowing that Colonel Thompson, the Remount Agent at Oossoor, and Mr. H. S. Thomas, the Sub-Collector of Salem, had been engaged in making experiments in cultivation with the new ploughs, I wrote to Colonel Thompson, on the 5th May 1865, my letter, No. 310, for particulars connected with the ploughs, and not receiving a reply I again addressed him on the 6th June following in my letter, No. 398, wherein I specially requested to be informed which of the three kinds of ploughs then under trial was most suited for Nunjah cultivation, adding that it was most desirable that the question should be definitely settled, because several ryots in the Chellumbrum Talook, where the cultivation is almost exclusively wet, had expressed a desire to purchase ploughs, and it would be very unfortunate if, owing to imperfect information, they were supplied with a kind of implement unsuited to their lands; and I also similarly addressed Mr. H. S. Thomas on the same day in my letter, No. 399. Colonel Thompson replied to me on the 15th June,* and Mr. Thomas on the 24th idem,† and each of those gentlemen assured me that the lightest description of iron plough had been tried by them with success, and was admirably adapted to the ordinary cultivation of the country. On the 22nd May 1865, I extracted from the volume of Proceedings of the Revenue Board, for October 1864, the report sent by Mr. H. S. Thomas to the Revenue Board on his experiments with the dwarf ploughs, and sent translations thereof to the Tahsildars of the Sub-division, who were ordered to communicate the contents to the ryots, and report eventually if any applications were made to them for ploughs.

* Letter No. 45.
† Letter No. 179.

7. Five applications for iron ploughs were made from ryots in the Virdachellum Talook, and six in that of Chellumbrum, and, when writing to Mr. Reade on the 19th June‡ to order them to be made up in Madras, I added a requisition for two other ploughs, one for Mr. Pedroza, the District Moonsiff of Chellumbrum, who has land which he cultivates himself very intelligently, and one for myself; not that I had any land at all to cultivate, but simply because I thought it would the more encourage my ryots if they saw that I did not myself hesitate to purchase the

‡ Letter No. 435.

implement I was recommending to them, and with it I looked forward to carrying out a series of experiments, which I hoped would be as successful as those conducted by Mr. H. S. Thomas had proved in the adjacent District of Salem. In my letter, No. 641, dated 2nd September 1865, I informed the Collector that I required the ploughs to be of the lightest description, as being best suited to the ordinary cultivation.

8. The ploughs thus applied for were not received, and on the 28th November 1865, I wrote to Mr. Reade my letter, No. 877, reminding him that none had been sent; that the cultivation season was rapidly passing away, and I pointed out that, unless they were forwarded very speedily, the ryots would be obliged to keep the ploughs lying unused for many months after their receipt. Again, on the 12th February 1866, I addressed to Mr. Reade my letter, No. 98, to the same effect, and I then begged that if even one or two of the ploughs I had asked for were completed they might be sent to me at once, in order that I might myself superintend experiments with them when the ground was softened by the usual showers in April.

9. These letters, however, produced no effect, and on the 14th June 1866, I made over charge of the Sub-division to Mr. O. B. Irvine, and left the District on privilege leave, and up to that date not one plough had been received from Madras. During my absence Mr. Reade, on the 5th July, informed Mr. Irvine that seven of the new ploughs had been despatched by the Revenue Board, and directed him to distribute the ploughs to the ryots for whom they were intended, and collect the cost from them. Mr. Irvine issued orders to this effect on the 27th July and 7th August to the Sub-division Tahsildars.

10. On the 15th August, I resumed charge of the Sub-division, and as Mr. Reade was then severely ill I, at the same time, took charge of the Collector's Office from Mr. Irvine, and conducted his work, in addition to my own, until the 6th September 1866,* when I finally handed over the Sub-division to Mr. Irvine, and took up my new appointment of Judge of the Court of Small Causes at Cuddalore. During the short time that intervened between my return from leave and transfer to the Small Cause Court, I was never once out of Cuddalore; for the duties of Mr. Reade's office necessarily imposed on me a heavy additional amount of work, which required my presence constantly at head quarters.

* I write from memory as to the date up to which I retained charge of the Collector's office.

11. I respectfully submit that the correspondence I have now quoted shows, conclusively, that when I first began to invite applications for the iron ploughs, I was only acting in obedience to the express order of my superior officer; and that even when I did so, I was most cautious not to order a single plough to be made up until, in reply to inquiries of mine, I received positive assurances from Mr. Reade himself, and also from other officers who really knew what they were writing about, that the ploughs were admirably adapted for the requirements of the country, both as regards the description of soil, the means of draught, &c., and that I was so convinced of the fact that I ordered one of the same ploughs for myself, wherewith to conduct experiments in the presence of the ryots. That more than once I protested against the excessive delay that was taking place, on the ground that the ploughs would be sent at such a time of the year that they could not be made use of

for many months after their receipt. Further, that those ploughs that were ultimately sent came when the whole country was burnt up by an unusually dry season, and an attempt to make use of them then would, of course, have been futile; while I was myself in charge of the Sub-division for barely three weeks after my return from leave, and unable to attempt any agricultural experiments, in consequence of having to do Mr. Reade's current office work, in addition to my own.

12. If, before he endorsed Mr. Hathaway's opinion so readily, Mr. Reade had referred, as he could easily have done, to the correspondence proving these facts he would have done me, I submit, but simple justice; while Government would have been spared the necessity for calling on me for this explanation.

13. As regards my personal behaviour in the matter, I have only to say that, if my having spoken freely and without hesitation in favor of the new ploughs, and offered encouragement to two or three land-holders with whom I conversed to apply for them, can be called "making use of pressure," I must undoubtedly plead guilty to the accusation, and at the same time confess that I have lamentably misconceived the position and duty of a Revenue Officer. I have hitherto considered that it is the bounden duty of every public servant so employed to study carefully the disposition and requirements of the people placed in his charge, and to spare no pains, whenever an opportunity arises, in suggesting such improvements, and directing and assisting the efforts of those who accept his advice, as may best enable the community to extricate itself from the narrow groove into which it has sunk through prejudice, or ignorant ancient usage; and, in encouraging my ryots to apply for the new ploughs, I acted simply in this belief, and in accordance with the system I endeavoured to follow during the whole time I was Sub-Collector of South Arcot.

14. It is, no doubt, infinitely less troublesome to abstain from all efforts of this kind, to leave the Native community to improve its own condition as it can or chooses, and to deprecate any action or interference on the part of Government officials on the score of thereby avoiding "pressure," and so forth; but I venture to express the belief that the Districts administered by officers holding this opinion will invariably be found backward in improvements of every kind, and the people tenacious in their adherence to hold habits and customs.

15. My own experience as a Revenue Officer has shown me that the ryots are not really so obstinately prejudiced in favor of all their ancient ways as it has been the fashion to represent them; they are certainly childishly fanciful and timid about making changes in what they have been accustomed to, but with proper leading and judicious encouragement they would do a good deal, and the moment he perceives that the proposed change is really likely to be advantageous to his interests, more especially as regards his purse, no one can be more keenly alive to the advisability of improving on his old practice than the ryot of the present day.

16. Convinced of this, I endeavoured and (I have pleasure in believing) succeeded in obtaining the confidence of the more intelligent ryots in the Sub-division of South Arcot, and that was the reason why so many of them responded to my recommendation, and expressed their readiness to make trial of the new plough. That its introduction has, in the hands of my successor, proved so complete a failure I can only regard as an unqualified misfortune; for, after having once

made an attempt with such unfortunate results, it is certain that, for a very long time to come, the ryots of that Sub-division will turn a deaf ear to every suggested change. That this very plough should have succeeded so well when handled by Colonel Thompson and Mr. Thomas in Salem, and be so favorably reported on by Mr. Willix in North Arcot, and Mr. Keess in South Arcot, and should then be declared so utterly worthless by Mr. Hathaway in the same District, is certainly a most singular fact, and which it is difficult to account for, supposing that the experiment was carried out in a friendly spirit, and that the plough had really a fair trial. It should be borne in mind that the ploughs I ordered were to be of the smallest size and lightest description—a kind of plough that no farmer in his senses would ever think of making use of on land "not thoroughly cleared, but which has stumps of trees, masses of rock, and piles of stones all over it." But it is because of its unfitness for such work that Mr. Hathaway now so emphatically condemns the iron plough as useless in this country.

17. I would here, however, observe that it would be well if inquiry were made as to whether the seven ploughs made at the Madras Mint, and sent for distribution to the ryots on my requisition, were constructed according to the exact size and pattern indicated in my letter, No. 641, of the 2nd September 1865.* Mr. Reade, in the notification published in the *District Gazette*, wherein he first invited applications for the iron ploughs, specified the cost of the various sizes, as noted in the margin; but the cost of each plough that has been supplied to the ryots has been, I am informed, Rupees 35. It is true that the cost of carriage was to be in addition to the actual price of the plough, but Mr. Reade was careful to state that "when a number is ordered, the cost of carriage will be very trifling." The seven ploughs were sent all at once, it can hardly, therefore, be supposed that upwards of Rupees 10 has been added on account of carriage to the original cost price of each plough. But if this has not been the case, it is clear that a different kind of plough has been made up to that ordered by me, and Mr. Hathaway's failure can be then easily explained.

	Rs.	A.	P.
1 Plough, large	36	10	1½
1 Do. medium	25	1	3½
1 Do. small.....	24	9	7

* Paragraph 7 supra.

18. I have only, in conclusion, to offer Government my sincere thanks for the opportunity they have now so kindly afforded me of defending my official conduct against an imputation which, coming from the officer under whom I worked zealously for so many years, has been very grievous to me. Messrs. Reade and Hathaway's letters have been published in the volume of Proceedings of the Revenue Board, and I trust that Government will be pleased to do me the favor of allowing this my reply to be similarly made public, with such final order as they may eventually pass thereon.

19. The Proceedings of Government, to which I have now the honor to reply, reached me when I was busy preparing for my move from Chingleput to Tanjore, and after my arrival here the making myself acquainted with the working of this Court prevented my turning my attention for some time to more personal matters, and some delay then occurred in obtaining from the office of the Sub-Collector in

South Arcot the numbers, dates, *i. e.*, of the correspondence I have mentioned and quoted in this letter, the despatch of which has consequently, been delayed much longer than I expected or wished.

No. 110. ORDER THEREON, 5th February 1869, No. 316.

Miscellaneous.

1. The Right Honorable the Governor in Council considers Mr. Whiteside's explanation to be perfectly satisfactory.

2. Paragraph 2 of Mr. Reade's letter, dated 20th July 1868, No. 175, recorded in the G. O. under date 24th September 1868, No. 2,475, must evidently have been written without sufficient information. The Acting Sub-Collector, Mr. Hathaway, in a more recent letter has already expressed his regret that his first letter, upon which Mr. Reade founded his remarks, should have been read as conveying the idea that pressure had been used by his predecessor.

3. When replying to the G. O., under date 21st January 1869, No. 175, the Board of Revenue will state how, in their opinion, the rejected ploughs should be disposed of, and they will be good enough in the meantime to ascertain whether the precise description of plough applied for by Mr. Whiteside was supplied or not.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) R. A. DALYELL,
Acting Secretary to Government.

To W. S. Whiteside, Esq.
„ the Board of Revenue.

Exd. J. Tulloch.

Govt. of Madras.

REVENUE.

To

W. S. WHITESIDE, Esq.

&c., &c., &c.

Dated February, 5th.

Recd. *Encl.*

G. O., 5th February 1869, No. 316.

Rec-d the Board of Revenue
22nd March 1869

FEBRUARY.

Nos. 109-110.

Iron ploughs supplied to Ryots in South Arcot.—Mr. Whiteside's explanation, with reference to an imputation against his official conduct in connection with them, considered satisfactory.

been written from
~~Financial forfeit~~
~~forgetfulness of the~~
~~true facts of the case~~ (and)
the A. Sol Gen. Mr Hathaway
in a recent letter
has already explained
his neglect to ~~this~~ first letter,
upon which Mr Rusk
founded his remarks
which have been
~~has~~ read as conveying
~~the~~
~~an~~ idea that
pressure had been used
by his predecessor.

When replying to
the G. O. under date
21st January 1889 ~~Pb 175~~ the Board of
Revenue will ~~give them~~
~~Opinion as to what~~
~~Market rate Wages~~

State law, in their
opinion, the rejected
blanks

A

should be disposed of
~~from~~
~~with the rejected blanks~~, and
they will be good enough in
the meantime to ascertain
whether the ~~parties~~ description of
blanks applied for by
the Petitioners were rejected
or not.

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Copy to F. B. S. Whiteside Esqre Dispo 6
11 Copies — Dy of Del N

