M.R.O. 1—30,000—16-10-29.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 723 Press Mis.

430-431

Dated 17 th March 1869

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 430. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 20th November 1868, No. 8,199A:—

Read the following letter from the Acting Collector of Madras, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Sydapet, 7th September 1868, No. 282.

1. With reference to the Board's Miscellaneous Circular Order, dated the 12th June 1865, No. LXII., and Mr. Fane's letter of the 25th January 1866, No. 31, reviewed in Board's Proceedings of the 3rd February 1866, No. 806, I have the honor to submit a Statement shewing the extent and assessment of lands exclusively under well cultivation, and the financial effect of reducing such assessment to the highest Punjah rate of the village.

2. The wells in this district may be classified under three heads; first, those originally sunk by Government and maintained in repair at the expense of the State. Second, those said to have been originally constructed by the State, but since abandoned and now kept in repair by the ryots themselves; and, lastly, those constructed by private individuals and kept in repair at their own expense.

3. It will be seen from the Statement now forwarded, that the total number of private or *quasi* private wells is 1,985, and the ayacut under them consists of Acres 5,491, assessed at Rupees 20,483.

4. The number of wells that are *bona fide* the property of Government, and are also maintained in repair at the cost of the State is only 16, and the ayacut under them amounts only to Acres 59, assessed at Rupees 275.

5. The well lands in this district were divided into two classes; first, those in which a Nunjah produce is usually raised; and, secondly, those in which a Garden produce is raised. Lands of the former class were entered in the Revenue Accounts until last year as regular Nunjah, and the latter as "Garden," but this distinction was done away with, in Fusly 1276, under the orders of the Board.

Vide Board's Circular Memorandum, 14th August 1866, No. 787.

6. The assessment of these garden lands formed the subject of a full inquiry so far back as 1856, when, on the reports of Messrs. Smollet and Shubrick, the then Collectors, the Government were pleased to sanction a revision in the assessment of this class of lands, which varied from one to six pagodas a cawny.

7. The effect of this revision was to do away with all rates above 7 Rupees, and to leave the lower rates undisturbed, although Mr. Smollet and Mr. Shubrick strongly advocated the introduction of a uniform rate of one pagoda a cawny throughout the district. On this point, I would refer the Board to the marginally noted correspondence.

17th October 1857, No. 1,063.
Board's Procs., 4th November 1857, No. 3,716.
Do. 27th August 1857, No. 2,862.

8. The Statement now forwarded exhibits the financial effect of reducing the existing rates of assessment on all well lands, whether cultivated with Nunjah or Garden produce, to the highest Punjah rate of the village.

9. Where the existing assessment is less than the highest Punjah assessment of the village, and where there is no Punjah rate whatever, the present rates are left undisturbed, taking care, however, that in no case shall the future assessment of any well lands be lower than one Rupee an acre.

10. The Board will thus see that the immediate sacrifice of revenue to the Government by the proposed change on the cultivated area is Rupees 5,336, while

on the waste it is Rupees 4,265, in all amounting to Rupees 9,601, or forty-eight per cent. on the total ayacut under wells.

11. I enclose a table of present and future rates of lands under well irrigation in this district, from which the Board will see that the effect of revising the assessment of lands under wells, on the principle laid down in the Order of Government, has been to raise the number of rates from twenty-nine to thirty-seven.

12. The Board will observe, that, owing to the reductions made in the time of Mr. Shubrick, there are no exceptionally high rates now on well lands in this district, 7 Rupees per cawny being the maximum.

13. A large proportion of the lands are, however, uncultivated, and it is probable that the expense of clearing wells and working them, added to the assessment, may deter ryots from cultivating the lands now left waste.

14. It is, I think, a matter of the first importance to encourage well irrigation by every means; it is needless to dwell on the general advantages of an extended use of wells; but it is certainly of unusual importance in this district, where the rain-fall is apt to be scanty in the early months of the cultivating season, and where there is such an abundant supply of water at a moderate depth beneath the soil, which only requires a trifling outlay of capital to be made available for irrigation over a wide extent of country.

15. With this view, I would advocate the early reduction of the rates in preference to postponing the reduction until the new settlement is introduced.

Enclosures Nos. 1 and 2.—Statements.

Submitted to Government, with the Board's recommendation that the Acting Collector's proposals be sanctioned.

2. As Government are aware, the Board, on receipt of the Government Order, dated 10th April 1865, No. 776, communicating a Despatch from the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India, approving of the reduction of the assessment on old private well lands in the districts of Coimbatore, Bellary, Kurnool, and North Arcot, issued a Circular to the Collectors of the remaining districts, directing them to reduce the assessment paid by such lands to the highest Punjah rate of the village, with the proviso that one Rupee per acre was to be the minimum assessment; and to report the financial results for the information of the Board and Government.

3. All the districts except Madras, complied with this requisition, and such reductions have been sanctioned by Government as the Board have from time to time recommended.

4. The Collector of Madras, whose proposals are now submitted, has only now made a definite report on the subject. Mr. Fane, however, with reference to the Board's Circular above quoted, stated in letter, dated 25th January 1866, No. 31, that the answers received from the talooks were too meagre to enable him to furnish a full reply; but that the cultivation under wells was very limited, amounting to about 5,393c Acres, assessed at Rupees 20,858, or on an average at Rupees 3¾ per Acre, and that the reduction ordered would cause an annual loss on a rough estimate of about one-fourth of the present revenue.

5. The following is an abstract of Statement No. 1, now furnished by Mr. Thornhill:—

Classification of wells.	Number of wells.	Garden Ayacut. Extent.	Present assessment.	Proposed assessment.	Decrease.	Nunjah Ayacut. Extent.	Present assessment.	Proposed assessment.	Decrease.
		Acres.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Acres.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
1. Wells sunk and maintained in repair by Government	16	17 4 14	89 9 11	.....	.....	41 38 13	185 14 2	.....	.....
2. Wells said to have been originally sunk by Government, but since abandoned and kept in repair by the ryots themselves...	115	49 2 5	148 13 4	97 5 7	51 7 9	1,754 26 5	5,741 9 4	3,482 2 0	2,259 7 4
3. Wells sunk by ryots and maintained in repair by themselves	1,870	879 31 2	3,594 6 1	1,857 15 10	1,736 6 3	2,807 21 9	10,998 9 6	5,444 5 6	5,554 4 0
Total of Items 2 and 3...	1,985	928 33 7	3,743 3 5	1,955 5 5	1,787 14 0	4,562 7 14	16,740 2 10	8,926 7 6	7,813 11 4
Add Garden...	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	928 33 7	3,743 3 5	1,955 5 5	1,787 14 0
Total of Nunjah and Garden.	.....	5,491 1 6	20,483 6 3	10,881 12 11	9,601 9 4				
Of which are cultivated...	.....	2,873 9 15	10,814 11 7	5,473 10 10	5,336 0 9				
And the remainder waste...	.....	2,617 31 6	9,668 10 8	5,403 2 1	4,265 8 7				

6. The above results vary but very slightly from those estimated by Mr. Fane, and noted in paragraph 4 above. Excluding the extent of land under Government wells maintained at present in repair at the cost of the State, there are 5,491 Acres, assessed at Rupees 20,483, under the remaining 1,985 wells, to which the Acting Collector proposes to apply the reduced rates. The reduction of assessment on the whole area amounts to Rupees 9,602; but as only 2,873 Acres are cultivated, the amount of actual revenue to be immediately relinquished is Rupees 5,336, while there will be still available waste to the extent of 2,617 Acres, assessed at the reduced rates at Rupees 5,403.

7. The Board regret the delay which has occurred in making the reduction as required by the Right Honorable the Secretary of State. The Collector will adopt measures for carrying out the proposed reduction at the coming Settlement.

No. 431. ORDER THEREON, 17th March 1869, No. 723.

Land Revenue.

1. The Orders of the Board in paragraph 7 of their Proceedings directing the Collector to carry out, during the present settlement, the reduction of the assessment of the old well lands of the Madras District, are approved and sanctioned.

2. It appears that the result of the measure will be an immediate loss of revenue amounting to Rupees 5,336, but that a considerable portion of this sum will probably be recovered in future years, as 2,617 Acres of the lands in question are now waste and unoccupied, which at the new rates will be assessed at Rupees 5,403.

3. The Government desire to have full particulars regarding the 16 wells which are said to have been constructed and to be kept in repair at the cost of the State. The period of their construction and the annual expenditure in their repair should be reported.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Board of Revenue.
.. the Director of Revenue Settlement.

Fxd. G. A. Turton.

Govt. of Madras (1869) 23 March
REVENUE.
To
THE BOARD OF REVENUE,
&c., &c., &c.
Dated March, 17th.
Rec'd.
Read.
G. O., 17th March 1869, No. 723.

MARCH.
Nos. 430-431.

Old well lands of the Madras District.—Orders of the Board of Revenue on the subject of carrying out the reduction of assessment, approved. Board of Revenue to report on the 16 wells constructed and kept up at the cost of the State.

&c.

Printed by (illegible)
Superintendent, Government Press, 1869.

Revenue Depart.

No. 725.

Proceedings of the Madras Government under date the 17th March 69.

Read the following Ro: of the Bd of Revenue (Rl: 20th Novr 68 No. 5199)

The orders of the Board in para 7 of their Proceedings directing the Collector to carry out, during the period of settlement, the reduction of the assessment of the old well lands of the Madras Unit are approved and sanctioned.

It appears that the result of the measure will be an immediate loss of revenue amounting to Rs. 5336, but that a considerable portion of this sum will probably be recovered in future years, as 2,617 acres of the lands in question are now waste and unoccupied, which at the new rates will be assessed at Rs 6403

The first claim to remit

full particulars regarding
the 16 wells which are
said to have been con-
structed and to be kept
in repair at the cost
of the State. The period
of their construction and
the amount of expenditure
on their repair should
be specified.

No 15

14 Copies to the Rt Revd with Seals. Despt 18-
13 — To Revd Sec 15