MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1387 Press Mis.

421-422

Dated 18th May 1869

Not to be folded or roughly handled

1869

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 18th May 1869.

No. 421. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 12th May 1869, No. 3,231:—

Read the following:—

From the Collector of the Madras District, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Sydapet, 1st May 1869, No. 128.

I HAVE much pleasure in forwarding, herewith, copy of Mr. Fraser's report to the Superintending Engineer of the opening of the Ennore bar.

2. The Board will be glad to observe that the cost has been considerably under what was anticipated.

3. I now beg to recommend that Mr. Fraser's proposition to open the Pulicat bar be sanctioned, and the advance of 5,000 Rupees for the purpose be applied for from Government.

4. The reasons for the necessity of this further expenditure are fully set forth in the note to Mr. Fraser's letter to the Superintending Engineer; but I can also answer myself for it, as only lately at Ennore, I noticed that all day and every day the present prevailing winds were forcing the water that comes in, at the lately opened Ennore bar up the canal towards the large and now empty Pulicat lake.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From W. FRASER, Esq., C.E., Executive Engineer, East Coast Canal, to the Superintending Engineer, 4th Divison, dated Mount Road, 27th April 1869, No. 18.

I HAVE the honor to inform you that I opened the Ennore bar very successfully yesterday morning at 8¼ o'clock:—

A channel, 30 yards wide at the bottom, (which was at the level of the surface of Ennore lake) with side slopes of 3 to 1 was cut from the backwater to the sea. At 8¼ o'clock the barrier was removed and the sea allowed to flow in. In a few minutes a strong current was established, and the first tide raised the surface of the lake 3 inches. From this and the two succeeding tides there was no ebb current; but this afternoon, there is a strong ebb tide and the channel is consequently being deepened out to sea.

The surface of the lake is now 17 inches higher than it was before the bar was opened; and as the gates of Sheddiemkuppam Lock were forced open, I presume that some water has reached the Cooum river.

2. I expected to have heard from you on Saturday the decision of Government about the proposed deepening of the Cooum; but not hearing, I bunded across the canal at Chintamony, which is north of all the salt canals for the purpose of giving a good supply of water to the Salt works, Cochrane's Canal, and the Cooum, by preventing it from flowing to Pulicat lake. Coolies are placed at the bund to remove the sand bags from the centre to allow boats to pass.

3. When this bund is removed, the water will, as usual flow away to Pulicat lake; and I would, therefore, recommend that that bar should also be opened. If sanction is given immediately, I can open it about the 24th of next month.

It could be opened on the 11th of next month if coolies could be got to work willingly; but it was with the greatest difficulty I got a Contractor to undertake the opening of Ennore bar; as some evil disposed people who did not wish us to succeed had circulated amongst the coolies the idea that before the bar could be opened, 27 coolies, men and women were to be sacrificed to appease the god of the sea: the consequence was, that it was nearly impossible to keep them at work; and when we came to remove the barrier, just at the critical moment when they were most wanted, when the first splash of water came in, they all ran away.

Fortunately, a sheep was readily procured, and when it was sacrificed and its blood sprinkled about, a few coolies were induced to return and remove the barrier, in a kind of way, but not so effectually as it should have been. This state of things may appear very extraordinary, but nothing is too absurd for these men to believe or do. I have never come across a class of people so ignorant and debased as are the Ubruwar Maistries and Coolies about Madras. Their only enjoyment appears to be getting drunk.

The account of the cost opening this bar will be submitted in two or three days. I expect it will be considerably under the amount placed at my disposal.

I shall be obliged if you will communicate the contents of this letter to the Board of Revenue, and to the Government, and let me know the decision about Pulicat bar as speedily as possible.

4. I have again to complain of the conduct of the fishermen of the two villages of Ennore and Kattivakkam. I sent for the Moonsiffs, one came and promised to have 100 fishermen ready when I wanted them, I agreeing to pay them whatever the Moonsiff said they should get.

I wanted 30 on Sunday night to watch and keep good the fence I had put up from 7 until 11 o'clock P. M. They refused to give me any assistance, although they knew they would be paid for their time. Depending on the fishermen coming, I had allowed all the coolies to go away; and to keep the fence secure, the Overseer, Writer, Goomastahs, and Lascars, who had been working hard all day, had to remain out until past 11 o'clock when all danger to the fence was over.

These fishermen pay nothing for the right of fishing in the backwaters. They are greatly interested in the opening of the bar, as only then can a supply of fish come in; their services are of great value at the most critical time, as they have no fear of the water; and I think it is very hard that we should not have such services available on such exceptional occasions as these.

No. 19.

I HAVE the honor to request that the Collector will be good enough to express his opinion to the Board of Revenue about the opening of Pulicat bar.

I cannot keep the navigation bunded across at Chintamony for any considerable time, and, whenever the bund is removed, nearly all the water coming in by the Ennore bar will flow away to Pulicat lake.

The opening of Pulicat bar would supply the lake directly, and improve the navigation throughout. I believe that the cost of opening Ennore bar will not much exceed 3,000 Rupees. Pulicat bar would cost more, but would not exceed 5,000 Rupees.

29th April 1869. (Signed) W. FRASER, C.E.,
Executive Engineer.

From the Collector of Madras, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue,
dated Kattivakkam, 6th May 1869, No. 133.

WITH reference to the Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 5th instant, received this date, I have the honor to forward copy of a letter I lately addressed to Mr. Fraser, C.E. In it I describe the present state of the Ennore bar, and ask Mr. Fraser whether, seeing it is so difficult to open a bar, it is now worth while spending money in opening the bar at Pulicat. When Mr. Fraser's answer is received, I will send it on to the Board.

2. Tuesday next is again a high tide, and I see coolies are now employed at the Ennore bar preparatory to an attempt to re-open it on that day. If Mr. Fraser's efforts are again crowned with success, and as much water is admitted into the Lake and Canal, as was last high tide, I think we may then consider it worth while spending money each tide at Ennore, and also in making the attempt at Pulicat.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From the Collector of the Madras District, to the Executive Engineer, East Coast Canal, dated Camp at Kattivakkam, 4th May 1869, No. 166.

I VISITED the Ennore bar last evening and was sorry to find that water has ceased to flow through the opening in it you lately made.

2. The Lake and Canal are both rapidly again becoming from evaporation too shallow for navigation and salt manufacture; and I, therefore, write to ask you what you would propose doing to remedy these evils, it appears to me that a band of coolies kept on throughout the month at the bar would prevent the silting up that occurs during the low tides, by clearing away the sand immediately it rests within the channel way. I may be wrong, however, and would therefore suggest your visiting the spot yourself.

3. I think we shall now, that this opening of the Ennore bar has been of effect for so short a time, have to consider, whether it will be worth while opening the Pulicat bar.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) H. RICHARDSON,
Deputy Collector, for Collector.

From the Collector of Madras, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Sydapet, 8th May 1869, No. 137.

I HAVE the honor to forward an interesting communication from Mr. Fraser, C. E., fully explaining the reason for the Ennore bar having closed so soon after it was opened, but giving us every reason to hope that at each spring tide there will be a good flow of water over it, sufficient both for navigation and the salt manufacture.

2. Mr. Fraser does not say what the cost of opening the Pulicat bar would be, but from his description, it would evidently be an eminently useful work, and as it is of great importance to have everything ready by the 24th of this month (a high spring tide) I trust the Board will at once apply to Government for the sanction of an expenditure of 5,000 Rupees upon it, that being, in one of Mr. Fraser's late letters, the approximate estimate of its cost.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From W. FRASER Esq. C. E., Executive Engineer, East Coast Canal, to the Collector of Madras, dated Mount Road, 5th May 1869, No. 28.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date about the Ennore bar, and I am much obliged for your writing to me on the subject.

In my letter* to the Superintending Engineer, No. 18, dated 27th ultimo, reporting the opening of the bar, I stated that in consequence of the coolies running away at the last moment, the sea barrier was not removed so completely as it should have been.

* A copy of which was sent to you.

The result of this was that the sand which should have been removed was washed into the backwater, where it forms an extensive sand-bank at that end of the new channel.

2. I have often explained that this is one of the evils which are almost certain to arise from opening a bar from the sea inwards. If a bar is opened in the ordinary way, that is with a flood outwards, sand and silt are swept from the backwater to the sea, where the littoral current carries it away, north or south, from the mouth of the channel. On the other hand, when a bar is opened *from the sea*, the influent current carries with it all the sand it can wash away from the

bottom and sides of the new channel, and deposites it where it first meets the resistance of the still backwater, and hence the formation of the shoal at the Lake and of the Ennore bar.

Seeing that this was the case in the present instance, I hardly hoped that the bar would keep open during the first neap tides.

3. The only remedial measure we can adopt is, to remove the sand deposited daily at the sea end during the neap tides, so as to get as much water in as we can, and at the next springs, to clear away with the ebb current, as much as possible of the inner shoal.

The former is being done every day, and the latter will be done when the time comes, under my own superintendence. This is pretty much what you have suggested.

4. The Overseer returned here this morning from Ennore, Vallur, etc., and he reports that at high water yesterday, there was a depth of 9 inches, flowing pretty rapidly, over a width of 45 foot: this depth will increase every day as the tides are now "dead neaps." He further reports that there is water enough for salt manufacture and navigation; and of this, I am assured by the observations on the guage at Vallúr, by which I learn that the water is nearly at its average level.

5. As regards Pulicat bar, I am still disposed to recommend its being opened. I explained before that I had bunded across the Canal at Chintamony to prevent the water flowing to Pulicat lake: I cannot keep up this bund permanently, and whenever it is removed, the water will pass away and of course fall in Ennore lake and the Salt channels; and this will occur no matter how much water comes in over Ennore bar, for Pulicat lake is capable of absorbing the whole.

Pulicat bar is somewhat different from that at Ennore, for the lake or backwater is so extensive that once it is filled to the ordinary level of high water, the ebb current would be maintained for so long a time, probably for 8 hours, that we would have an opportunity of getting the sand swept out to sea. If there is no probability of heavy rain before October next, I would, unhesitatingly, recommend that Pulicat bar be opened.

(A true Copy.)

(Signed) E. G. R. FANE,
Collector.

THE Board resolve to request Government to sanction the opening of the Pulicat bar at a cost not exceeding Rupees 5,000.

2. The expenditure will be met out of the Reserve for Petty Construction and Repair.

3. The Board believe that Contractors could be got to undertake the opening of these bars for less than Mr. Fraser's operation cost, and request the Collector to ascertain whether this is not the case.

No. 422. ORDER THEREON, 18th May 1869, No. 1,387.

Separate Revenue, No. 15.
Salt.

SANCTIONED.

(True Extract.)

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

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

Exd. E. C. Shunker.

Revenue 1869. Nov.

Board of Revenue,

MADRAS.

No 1592.

PROCEEDINGS, 12TH MAY 1869, No. 3,231.

Encl

Received

MAY.

No. 3,231.

Pulicat Bar—in Madras District,—Government requested to sanction opening of, at a cost not exceeding Rupees 5,000,—Collector requested to state whether Contractors could be got to undertake work for less than Executive Engineer, Mr. Fraser's operation cost.

Encl. G. A. Tarrow.

Govt. of [1869] Madras.

REVENUE.

To

THE BOARD OF REVENUE,

&c., &c., &c.

Dated May, 1869.

Read.

G. O., 18*th May* 1869, *No.* 1,387.

MAY.

Nos. 421-422.

Pulicat Bar.—Its opening at a cost not exceeding Rupees 5,000, sanctioned.