

No 21 Decr 1870 - 80 Mar.
- 31 May 70 - 338 - 39.
- 17 June 70 211 - 42

Revenue 1870. *Over*

Board of Revenue,

MADRAS. *1870*

PROCEEDINGS, 17TH JUNE 1870, No. 4,208.

Recd 24 June 70
Received *27* Encl.

JUNE.

No. 4,208.

Quit-rent.—Letter from Collector of Sea Customs, Madras, proposing that present system of collecting, in town of Madras, through Bill-Collectors, should be abolished, submitted Government, with remarks; and that officer requested to report further on subject after he has had a few months' experience of working of Quit-rent Department.

C. B. 1870 No. 1120

218/1870

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1485	Press ~~Mis~~
242-243 Dated 21-9-1870 40.	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
21st September 1870.*

No. 242. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 17th June 1870, No. 4,208 :—

Read the following letter from the Collector of Sea Customs, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 20th May 1870, No. 407.

I HAVE the honour to inform the Board that since receiving their Proceedings of the 11th April 1870, No. 2,419, I have had several consultations with the present Deputy-Collector R. Ragoonada Row on the subject of the alterations proposed by the Board in the establishment of the Deputy-Collector's Office and the Income-tax Department.

2. I have also read all the papers connected with the late frauds in the Deputy-Collector's Office.

3. It appears to me absolutely necessary that a change should be made in the system of collection of Land Revenue. It is condemned by every officer who remarks on it, and in the most sweeping manner by the Advocate-General.

Paragraph 12, Advocate-General to Government, 8th November 1869.—See Proceedings, Madras Government, Judicial Department, 11th December 1869.

4. On consideration of Section 4, Act VI. of 1867, it does not appear to me necessary that any written demand or bill should be served on parties liable to pay rent; the "written demand" referred to seems required only when the rent is due in arrears after the end of the Fusly, after making which the Collector is directed how to proceed for the recovery of such revenue.

5. I propose therefore to issue a notice in the accompanying form, warning persons by whom Land Revenue is due that if they do not pay within the Fusly, they will be proceeded against, etc.

NOTICE.

"Notice is hereby given that the practice of presenting bills by Conicopillays for quit-rent due to Government by land-holders within the Town of Madras, shall cease from the 1st of July 1870."

"In future, land-holders shall pay quit-rent before the close of the Fusly for which it is due to the Deputy-Collector of the Town of Madras, and obtain a receipt from him for the same.

"Land-holders failing to pay quit-rent, and to obtain receipts within the Fusly for which it is due shall be proceeded against under the provisions of the Madras Act VI. of 1867."

6. Possibly I may have misinterpreted the Act, and the proposed alteration cannot legally be carried out.

7. In that event, I would earnestly press on the Board the advisability of moving Government to pass an Act legalizing the proposed mode of collection.

8. I am not asking the introduction of a new system; the Municipal taxes are collected in the mode proposed, and I can see no valid reason why Government taxes should not be collected in the same manner. Taxes would be paid into the Treasury instead of to a Conicopillay, and the present temptation to commit frauds would be removed.

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21st September 1870.*

9. With regard to the abolition of the Inspector, Shroff, eight Conicopillays, and eight Peons on the present Income-tax Establishment recommended by the Board, I would respectfully urge that

Paragraph 11, Board's Proceedings, 11th April 1870, No. 2,419.

for the present at least the services of the Inspector, Shroff, four Conicopillays, and six Peons should not be dispensed with.

10. In paragraphs 5 to 14 of their Proceedings, the Board propose several alterations in the mode of conducting business in the Land Revenue and Income-tax Departments. The Income-tax Collector and Native Assistant are to be abolished, and their work can be carried on by myself, the Deputy-Collector, and Tahsildar; but I fear, from information I have received from the Deputy-Collector, that if all the subordinate officers referred to are also abolished that the office-work in the Land Revenue and Income-tax Departments will fall into arrears.

11. The duties of the Distraining Officer in the Land Revenue Department are in future to be carried on by the three Land Revenue Inspectors, the same number as before; but the Inspector,

Conicopillays, and Peons of the Income-tax Department do not collect *Income-tax*; they have other work to perform, and have constantly to appear as witnesses before the Magistracy to prove service of notices, etc., on defaulters. Nearly all Income-tax payers, whose incomes are below Rupees 2,000, are prosecuted before they pay; for the collection of one year's Income-tax, the Deputy-Collector has already obtained about 2,000 summons and expects to require about 3,000 more. The Inspector, Conicopillays, and Peons of the Revenue Department cannot attend to this work as well as their own, and their duties in one department or other would therefore be inefficiently carried on.

12. The Deputy-Collector therefore proposes under the above circumstances to retain the Inspector, Shroff, four Conicopillays, and six Peons.

13. If the proposal made by me in paragraphs 5 to 8 be agreed to, I think I should most probably be able to make some reduction in the number of employés in the Land Revenue Department; but I would respectfully request the Board to re-consider their proposals for reductions in the Income-tax Departments and to alter them as requested by me.

14. In the course of a few months after taking charge of the Town of Madras, I should be able to report what establishment is absolutely required for Land Revenue and Income-tax, and looking to the reduction recommended by me in my present office, I think the Board may trust that if reductions can be made I shall recommend them as soon as I fully understand the quantity of work that has to be done.

In this letter, Mr. Hunter Blair proposes that the present system of collecting quit-rent in the Town of Madras by Bill Collectors should be abolished.

2. The evils of the present system are obvious, and they have been illustrated by the recent defaultations; but the Board are of opinion that it cannot be changed without a change in the law. Act VI. of 1867 does not define the officer to whom payment is to be made (as is done in Act II. of 1864, Section 3,) and in the absence of such definition the present custom of sending a Bill Collector for

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the money, is evidently what the Legislature intended. By Section 37, Act IX. of 1867, owners of carriages, etc., are expressly required to pay their license fees at the office of the Municipal Commissioners. There is no such provision with regard to house-rates, and the Municipality realize them by means of Bill Collectors.

3. The Board fear that there are other difficulties in the way besides the state of the law. The assessments are very numerous, and many of them are very small. They all fall due on the same day, and if the payers are to go to the Deputy-Collector's Office, they cannot be expected to distribute themselves over a sufficient number of days, but will probably crowd the office on such days as happen to be convenient to the bulk of them. It will be necessary therefore either to increase the office establishment out of all proportion to the revenue, or to keep some of those who come to pay their quit-rent bills waiting perhaps for many days. The Board expect also that the change in the manner of collecting quit-rent would enormously increase the number of coercive processes.

4. If the law is changed at all, the Board believe it will be the simplest and best course to alter it so as to allow the quit-rent collections to be farmed out. The total amount is only Rupees 70,000, and each charge is fixed so that there would be no danger of extortion.

5. Mr. Blair will be good enough to report fully on the subject after he has had a few months' experience of the working of the Quit-rent Department. He will state at the same time whether a re-settlement of the revenue is advisable, and if so, how it can be effected.

6. Mr. Blair's proposals with regard to the Income-tax Department have been dealt with in Board's Proceedings, dated 6th June 1870, No. 2,876.

7. These Proceedings will be submitted for the information of Government.

No. 243.

ORDER THEREON, 21st September 1870, No. 1,485.

Miscellaneous.

ORDERED to be recorded.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) H. E. STOKES,

Under-Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

Revised

The report called for in para 5 of
the foregoing Prg. should be submitted
for the information of Govt when received

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I would be simply "wired" in
the Bureau

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