

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	318	Press
		<i>MC</i>
³⁹⁻⁴⁰ Dated	7-3-1870	<i>N</i>

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
7th March 1870.*

No. 39. Read the following letter from the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, to the Acting Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Madras, 4th March 1870:—

I AM directed to forward copy of a Telegram received from the Secretary to the Legislative Council, together with a Memorandum drawn up in accordance with the request therein contained.

2. As Government may be in communication with the Honourable G. S. Forbes regarding the Irrigation Bill, the Board deem it advisable to transmit the Memorandum to Government, instead of forwarding it direct.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From the Secretary, Legislative Department, Calcutta, to the Secretary, Revenue Board, Madras.
PLEASE send soon to Honourable Gordon, Forbes's Memorandum showing effect of irrigation on certain black soils in Godavery, and Board's action regarding water-rate thereon.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.

MEMORANDUM.

THE telegram asks for information regarding effect of irrigation on certain black soils in Godavery.

This is probably an error for Kistna, where the effect of "Souda" on black soils irrigated has been the subject of inquiry.

2. Irrigation from the Kistna Aicut commenced in 1855 and 1856.

3. With a view to encourage the people to irrigate their lands water was charged for at first on a gradually increasing scale, under which it took four or five years before the full rate of water-tax was levied. This period was reached about 1861.

4. In the same year regular Rules for the levy of the water-rate were promulgated by the Board.

5. Under these rules it was provided that "land once classed as *nunjali* cannot be transferred to *punjali*, unless the means of irrigation fail permanently."

6. From this time complaints began to be received that certain lands under the influence of irrigation had turned "Souda," and applications were made for permission to relinquish irrigation as regards those lands.

7. The "Souda" complained of was a saline efflorescence which made its appearance on the surface of the soil and rendered it either partially or wholly barren.

8. It was not absolutely confined to any particular locality, but was most commonly developed by the sides of irrigation channels, especially where the surface of the water was about the level of the ground.

9. There are several different kinds of "Souda"; some more destructive to vegetation than others.

10. The worst kind has a brown snuff-coloured appearance, and has the property of falling under the feet when ever so slightly moistened, like snow.

11. In 1865 revised rules were issued, under which ryots were allowed two years' trial of irrigation before their lands were finally classed as irrigated, and permanently charged with water-rate. Thus "ryots were to distinctly understand that if water be taken for three years in succession the land will be permanently classed as irrigated," but no provision was made for relieving the ryot from the payment of water-rate in the event of land becoming "Souda" or otherwise unfit for irrigation. Complaints regarding the unsuitableness of some soils for wet cultivation, whether from "Souda" or other causes, however continued to increase, and in May 1867 the

Proceedings, 15th May 1867, No. 2,999.

Collector addressed the Board on the subject, and pointed out that the desire to re-convert certain of

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their lands from "wet" to "dry" on the part of the ryots of the talook was so great that no less than 4,000 acres had paid Rupees 17,278 after deducting remission of water-tax, although they were either left waste or cultivated with dry crops: it is not to be understood that this was *all* due to "Soudu;" but Soudu was very largely put forward as the reason.

12. Further information was called for, and the urgency of some relaxation was strongly pressed by the Acting Collector, but from his replies the Board are led to suppose that if the

Proceedings, 5th August 1868, No. 5,679.

rules had been more fully explained and acted up to with greater strictness, there would not have been so much ground for complaint. Some of the land having been taken up informally it had not been possible to apply the rules to it, but the Board recognized the necessity of redress, and authorized the Collector to give full option of refusing irrigation for the ensuing two years to all holders of dry land converted into wet. This was a less decided measure than that of allowing the absolutely unfettered option contemplated by the Secretary of State.

13. They also ruled that as "with regard to Godavery 'Soudu' lands they had ordered

Paragraph 6.

"that no water-rates should be levied so long as, from that temporary cause, the land continued uncultivable, but that the land assessment should be charged if the ryot desired to retain his lien in the land, so similar relief should be given to the Kistna District."

14. This option appears to have been freely taken advantage of, and in the season 1868-69 about 10,000 acres of land previously converted into wet have been withdrawn from irrigation.

15. The matter was prominently brought before Government in connection with estimates for the extension of the works.

16. It was discussed very fully in the different departments of the Government and by the

Government Order, 17th December 1868, No. 5,941.

Board's Proceedings, 9th March 1869, No. 2,969.

Board; the result was that on the recommenda-

tion of the Board the Government appointed a

Special Officer to inquire into the causes which had led to the supposed disinclination to irrigation of the people of the Kistna District.

17. Mr. Master's Report has been submitted to Government.

No. 40.

ORDER THEREON, 7th March 1870, No. 318.

Irrigation No. 2.

ORDERED to be forwarded to the Secretary to Legislative Department, Government of India. No communi-

cation has been received by this Government on the subject of the Irrigation Bill.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) R. A. DALYELL,

Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

Edw. F. H. Bantleman.

Recd 1870 Sept

No 672

The A. Sultan to
Board of Revenue

The A. Sultan to
Government
R.D.

Latuk March 1870

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Rec 14th
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No

M. 318 7 March 1870

Frugation - memo showing
effect of, on certain
black soils in Kistna
Dist, submitted to Govt.
together with a telegram
from Secy to Govt. of
Orissa, on subject.