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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. / 38	Press ~~Mis.~~
Dated	21-1-1877

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
21st January 1871.*

No. 285. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 28th November 1870, No. 6,861 :—

Read the following letter from the Acting Collector of Coimbatore, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 19th September 1870, No. 224.

With reference to the subject of my letter of the 9th May last, No. 110, embodied in the Board's Proceedings of the 13th ultimo, No. 5,284, I have the honour to submit for their consideration copy of a letter, dated 31st ultimo, No. 95, from the Superintending Engineer. His proposal to clear the channels annually on regular estimate by the officers of his department have my full concurrence, and the Board will observe that, although we have had no communication on the subject, we have both arrived at the conclusion that the fairest mode of providing funds for the purpose is by raising the demand of the State sufficiently to meet the cost of the work.

2. With reference to the latter part of paragraph 6 of the Board's Proceedings, I respectfully submit that there could not be better grounds for taking such a step or any in the propriety of which the people would more readily acquiesce than those existing in the present case. If we come to a question of "public policy," I unhesitatingly affirm, and I am sure the experience of the Board will support my views, that it would be far more acceptable to the people to pay an enhanced land-tax, the Government as in former days undertaking to do every thing, than to be there, which so far as their pockets are concerned, amounts to virtually the same thing; the only difference being that in the one case they know where they are and what they have to pay; in the other, they are doubtful on both points.

3. Whatever course may be decided on, I would earnestly deprecate any postponement of the question such as is hinted at in paragraph 7 of the Board's Proceedings. These river-channels convey the life-blood of the country, and if the arteries become choked, as they inevitably will to a certain extent, unless prompt measures are resorted to, a large tract of food-producing land will be laid waste.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From the Acting Superintending Engineer, 7th Division, to the Acting Collector of Coimbatore, dated 31st August 1870, No. 95.

WHEN on my tour of inspection in the Caroor Taluq in June and July last, on inspecting the Pallapollicm channel, I found it had been very improperly cleared in some parts, and in others not at all; and the ryots submitted a petition to me, praying that the clearing of the channel might be executed by Government, noting that formerly Rs. 400 were allowed to them by Government for the work, which sum was subsequently withdrawn, the channels having been for many years past cleared by voluntary contributions to this amount, the work being undertaken by the Tahsildar, to whom the money used to be paid. Of late years, however, it is understood that the Tahsildar has been unable to collect these contributions, the payment of which has been resisted by the ryots, and not being legally recoverable by the Tahsildar, a great deal of annoyance has been the result, often ending in the channel being left uncleared to the detriment of the cultivators of land at the end of this channel. Under these circumstances, I would recommend the sanction of Rs. 400 for clearing the channel, the work this year being completed (since it

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
21st January 1871.*

has been commenced) by the Tahsildar, and in future this, like other similar channels, should be inspected by the Public Works Officers and cleared on regular estimate by this department.

2. From the notes made during my tour, I observe that many channels are cleared and well cleared by the ryots without assistance from the State, and apparently without any pressure from the Revenue Department, while several others are often almost in ruin from determined neglect on the part of the ryots, thinking that the State will do the work for them. It appears to me to be such an anomaly that the State should, in some instances, direct some channels to be cleared at Imperial cost, while such assistance is denied to channels in the immediate neighbourhood of those so cleared, the assessment on the nunjah cultivation in both cases being precisely the same. There is evidently a willingness on the part of the ryots generally to pay for such annual clearances; all they want is that its cost should be definitely fixed, and the burden be justly distributed. I have

* No. 2,955, dated 1st May 1869.
" " 2nd Sept. "

carefully read the Board's Proceedings* in reference to your own, and Mr. Webster's suggestions on the general subject of voluntary

contributions for the repairs of irrigation works, and would recommend that the Board be urged to move Government to come to some decision on the subject, and thus set the matter at rest. I think a move in the right direction would be to establish an annual maintenance grant for each channel at the rate of 110 Rs. per mile for all 1st-class channels like the Arakencotta, Thadapully, and Calangaroyen; 2nd-class channels Rs. 75 per mile like those from the Ambrawatty, Noyel, and other rivers; 3rd-class Rs. 55, and 4th-class Rs. 25, like those supplying large and small tanks, the assessment of the land watered being increased to such an amount per acre as would cover the requisite maintenance grants. I am perfectly aware that the subject is one requiring deep consideration, and that it has occupied the attention of all connected with it for a long time, and I approach it with considerable reluctance; yet I consider it my duty to recommend, and trust that the maintenance system above suggested may meet the approval of the Board as to the principle on which the increased assessment necessary to meet the usual annual repairs may very fairly be calculated.

SUBMITTED to Government in continuation of Board's Proceedings, 13th August 1870, No. 5,284.

2. The question as to whether the cost of clearing the Coimbatore channels should be provided by raising the assessment on land has been settled by Government Order, 1st November 1870, No. 1,680.

No. 286.

ORDER THEREON, 21st January 1871, No. 138.

Miscellaneous.

ORDERED to be recorded.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) C. D. MACLEAN,
Acting Under-Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

Edw. F. R. Bantleman.

Channels in Coimbatore District.—Proceedings Board of Revenue on the proposal for clearing them annually on regular estimates by Public Works Department, recorded.

JANUARY.
NO. 235-286.

Dated January, 21st.
Recd.
G. O., 21st January 1871, No. 138.

THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

REVENUE.

Govt. of 1871

No. 6,861.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 28th November 1870.

Read the following letter from H. E. SULLIVAN, Esq., Acting Collector of Coimbatore, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 19th September 1870, No. 224:—

With reference to the subject of my letter of the 9th May last, No. 110, embodied in the Board's Proceedings of the 13th ultimo, No. 5,284, I have the honour to submit for their consideration, copy of a letter, dated 31st ultimo, No. 95, from the Superintending Engineer. His proposal to clear the channels annually on regular estimate by the officers of his department, have my full concurrence, and the Board will observe that although we have had no communication on the subject, we have both arrived at the conclusion that the fairest mode of providing funds for the purpose is by raising the demand of the State sufficiently to meet the cost of the work.

2. With reference to the latter part of paragraph 6 of the Board's Proceedings, I respectfully submit, that there could not be better grounds for taking such a step or any in the propriety of which the people would more readily acquiesce than those existing in the present case. If we come to a question of "public policy," I unhesitatingly affirm, and I am sure the experience of the Board will support my views, that it would be far more acceptable to the people to pay an enhanced land tax, the Government as in former days undertaking to do every thing, than to be saddled with a cess here and a cess there, which so far as their pockets are concerned, amounts to virtually the same thing; the only difference being that in the one case they know where they are and what they have to pay; in the other, they are doubtful on both points.

3. Whatever course may be decided on, I would earnestly deprecate any postponement of the question such as is hinted at in paragraph 7 of the Board's Proceedings. These river channels convey the life-blood of the country, and if the arteries become choked, as they inevitably will to a certain extent, unless prompt measures are resorted to, a large tract of food-producing land will be laid waste.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From Lieutenant-Colonel W. FAREWELL, S.C., Acting Superintending Engineer, 7th Division, to the Acting Collector of Coimbatore, dated 31st August 1870, No. 95.

When on my tour of inspection in the Caroor Talook, in June and July last, on inspecting the Pallapolliem channel, I found it had been very improperly cleared in some parts, and in others not at all; and the ryots submitted a petition to me, praying that the clearing of the channel might be executed by Government, noting that formerly Rupees 400 were allowed to them by Government for the work, which sum was subsequently withdrawn, the channels having been for many years past cleared by voluntary contributions to this amount, the work being undertaken by the Tahsildar, to whom the money used to be paid. Of late years, however, it is understood that the Tahsildar has been unable to collect these contributions, the payment of which has been resisted by the ryots, and not being legally recoverable by the Tahsildar, a great deal of annoyance has been the result, often ending in the channel being left uncleared to the detriment of the cultivators of land at the end of this channel. Under these circumstances I would recommend the sanction of Rupees 400 for clearing the channel, the work this year being completed (since it has been commenced) by the Tahsildar, and in future this, like other similar channels, should be inspected by the Public Works Officers and cleared on regular estimate by this department.

2. From the notes made during my tour, I observe that many channels are cleared and well cleared by the ryots without assistance from the State, and apparently without any pressure from the Revenue Department, while several others are often almost in ruin from determined neglect on the part of the ryots thinking that the State will do the work for them. It appears to me to be such an anomaly that the State should in some instances, direct some channels be cleared at Imperial cost, while such assistance is denied to channels in the immediate neighbourhood of those so cleared, the assessment on the nunjah cultivation in both cases being precisely the same. There is evidently a willingness on the part of the ryots generally to pay for such annual clearances, all

they want is that its cost should be definitely fixed and the burden be justly distributed. I have carefully read the Board's* Proceedings in reference to your own, and Mr. Webster's suggestions on the general subject of voluntary contributions for the repairs of Irrigation works, and would recommend that the Board be urged to move Government to come to some decision on the subject and thus set the matter at rest. I think a move in the right direction would be to establish an annual maintenance grant for each channel at the rate of 110 Rupees per mile for all 1st Class channels like the Arakencotta, Thadapully and Calangaroyen; 2nd Class channels Rupees 75 per mile like those from the Ambrawatty, Noyel, and other rivers; 3rd Class Rupees 55, and 4th Class Rupees 25, like those supplying large and small tanks, the assessment of the land watered being increased to such an amount per acre as would cover the requisite maintenance grants. I am perfectly aware that the subject is one requiring deep consideration, and that it has occupied the attention of all connected with it for a long time, and I approach it with considerable reluctance; yet I consider it my duty to urge its early settlement, and trust that the maintenance system above suggested may assist in at all events guiding the Board as to the principle on which the increased assessment necessary to meet the usual annual repairs may very fairly be calculated.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) H. E. SULLIVAN,
Acting Collector.

Submitted to Government in continuation of Board's Proceedings, 13th August 1870,
No. 5,284.

2. The question as to whether the cost of clearing the Coimbatore channels should be provided by raising the assessment on land has been settled by Government Order, 1st November 1870, No. 1,680.

(True Copies and Extract.)

J. G. S.
Acting Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

Copy to the Acting Collector of Coimbatore.

Exd. G. A. Turton.

14 Tatta, 3rd Dec 1870

10. 1. 1871

Claims—in Coimbatore District.—Letter from Collector submitting proposal of Superintending Engineer for clearing of, Annually on regular estimates by P. W. Department, submitted to Government.

NOVEMBER
No. 6,861:

Exd. G. A.

Dec 12 3-22/70

PROCEEDINGS, 28TH NOVEMBER 1870, No. 6,561.

MADRAS. 11-3761

Board of Revenue,

Nov. 1870. *Dec 14*

RECORDED.

11. 1. 1871