Read the following :—

No. 180. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 8th November 1872, No. 2,166.

Read the following letter from R. W. BARLOW, Esq., Acting Collector of the Chingleput District, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Sydapet, 6th November 1872, No. 447.

WITH reference to the Board's docket on the Proceedings of Government, R. D., No. 1,400, of the 10th ultimo, I have the honour to state that I am in communication with Mr. Harington as to paragraph 4 of the said G. O.

2. With reference to paragraph 6, I have the honour to report that if the system of licensing is to be introduced, the 1st of January next will be a convenient date. When giving the salt-boat contract for two years from April last, the probability of the introduction of the system was provided for in the deed.

3. I wish, however, respectfully to raise the question whether the change is necessary at all. When eighteen months since I reported on the classification of the boats I was new to the district, and therefore confined myself to the question put to me, *i.e.*, how Rupees 40,000 per annum could best be realized by licensing? without venturing to question the expediency of the measure proposed by Mr. Blair, and already decided on. I had doubts however then, which have been strengthened by my recent tours north, when I passed several times up and down the canal, and spent some time there.

4. The present system, I find, works well, and people are *accustomed* to it, which is a great thing; its incidence, too, varies according to earnings, and the luck of each boat in obtaining cargo, and therefore making many trips; whereas license amounts have to be paid for in lump sums, without reference to traffic. I find, too, that in most cases tolls are paid by the shippers, and not by the boatmen at all, who, as a class, are very poor.

5. Judging by the actual collections of the past seven months, due allowance being made for the falling off in the receipts after the close of the salt-season, the revenue from tolls will be not less than Rupees 40,000, the minimum required by Government, and, if the canal is kept in good order, I have no reason to apprehend that the receipts will fall below this sum in future years; so the proposed change is not a financial necessity. Even should still larger returns be required from the canal, they could be more conveniently raised by increasing the toll on cargo-boats from 4 to 5 Annas per ton, and the rate for passenger-boats from 4 to 5 Annas per boat, than by a system of licensing.

6. It seems to me unadvisable to tax the boats plying on the Pulicat Lake, unless an absolute necessity exists (which seems not to be the case); they only use the natural back-water, and not the artificial canal-works on which money has been spent. Further, the traffic on the northern section of the canal, which does not pass through the Shadayankuppum Lock to Madras, is, I am of opinion, small and hardly worth considering as compared with the inconvenience of change; I have, however, written to Mr. Harington on this subject also, and would suggest that the introduction of the licensing system be deferred, at all events, till I get his reply. Should the traffic be more considerable than I imagine, the advisibility

of a toll at some northern point, payment of which would, of course, clear the Shadayankuppam Lock, might be considered.

7. I do not think that extortion has been practiced hitherto in the levy of tolls. The boatmen know perfectly well the tonnage of their boats, and that toll is charged only one way.

8. I have already explained my reasons for not raising this question sooner, and trusting that my doing so at this late date solely with a view to avoid a change that will, I think, be unattended with adequate results, may not be deemed out of place.

THE Board will await the reply from the Collector of Nellore.

No. 181. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 29th January 1873, No. 112.

Read again Board's Proceedings, 8th November 1872, No. 2,166.

Read also the following letter from C. E. PLUNKETT, Esq., Deputy-Collector in charge of the Salt Department, to the Collector of Nellore, dated 17th December 1872, No. 143:—

WITH reference to your No. 2,508, dated 29th October last, appended to copy of the Board's docket of the 24th idem, on the Proceedings of Government, No. 1,400, Revenue Department, dated 10th October 1872, I have the honour to state that from inquiries made through the Deputy-Tahsildar of Sriharikota, stationed at Kasba on the east side, and the Salt Superintendents of Tada and Sunnappuguntá on the west and south shores of the Pulicat Lake, it does not appear that there are any boats which are employed *exclusively* on the lake, and that do not use, when occasion offers, the portions of the canal north and south of the lake.

2. There is a small trade carried on between the villages on either shore and on the islands in the lake, but there are no boats *exclusively* so employed. The *whole* of the boats (except a few fishing boats, which by the orders under reference are to be omitted from the calculations) have been duly registered and numbered at the Canal Toll-house at Madras, and they are *all* available for service from *any* point to *any* point either on the lake or canal between Madras and Dugarazupatnam *whenever* required.

3. The number of trips in a year a boat makes depends entirely on its luck in obtaining a cargo, and not on the place to which it belongs or the place to which the cargo is meant to be taken. These are restrictions the boatmen do not understand; and it does not appear therefore from the result of my inquiries that there are any boats that could under the circumstances have been left out of the calculations given in the letters from the Collector and Superintending Engineer of Chingleput, and the Canal Executive Engineer, Mr. Harrington, on which the Government Order under reference has been passed.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
27th February 1873.

No. 2,948.

SUBMITTED to the Board, with reference to their docket dated 24th, on Government Order, Revenue Department, dated 10th October last, No. 1,400. I concur in Mr. Barlow's matured opinion, as expressed in his letter conveyed in Proceedings of Board of 8th November, No. 2,166, that after all the toll system is probably as remunerative, while it is certainly fairer and more suitable to the class of persons concerned than the proposed license system.

NELLORE, 19th December 1872. (Signed) G. VANSAGNEW, Collector.

As both the Collectors concerned advise against a change in the system of collecting boat-fees in Cochrane's Canal, the Board think matters should remain as they are.

No. 182. ORDER THEREON, 27th February 1873, No. 225.

Miscellaneous.

APPROVED. The Board will see that the revenue from tolls does not fall below Rs. 40,000 the minimum fixed by Government.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) D. F. CARMICHAEL,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
,, the Public Works Department.

Exd. G. A. Turton.

Revenue Department.

G. 225.

Proceedings of the Madras Government.

Under date the 27th February 1873.

Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue.

Submitting that proposal substitution of licence system for toll system at present in force for collection of Boat-fees in Cochrane's canal be abandoned. — (R. & C. 29th Jan.y 1873 No. 112.)

Approved. The Board will see that the revenue from tolls does not fall below Rs. 40,000 the minimum fixed by Government. —

R.V.C.

Board of Revenue. Do. 28th Feb.

P. W. Deptt.

C-19: Feb 53 R24:746:

G-O 10 October 1872 nos 66-68

Rev. 1873. Oct.

Board of Revenue,

MADRAS.

No. 299

PROCEEDINGS, 29TH JANUARY 1873, No. 112.

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G O Nos 226-27 February 1873

Received 27 Feby

Nos 189-192

JANUARY.

No. 112.

Boat-fees in Cochrane's Canal.—Proposed substitution of license system for toll system at present in force for collection of —— to be abandoned.

R. C. in Dept G.O. 19 Jan 1876 R 24 Jan 76.
C. 12 Feb 73 R 13 Feb 76.

Favored