Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 1st April 1873.

No. 3. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 21st March 1873, No. 427 :—

Read the following letter from T. A. N. CHASE, Esq., Collector of Kurnool, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 3rd March 1873, No. 72 :—

WITH reference to G. Os., No. 2,993, dated 17th December 1872, and No. 415, dated 7th February 1873, I have the honour to inform you that some draft rules regarding irrigation from the canal have been sent to Mr. Latham ; but I do not think that any final arrangements can be arrived at till after my departure from this district.

Vide Board's Proceedings, Miscellaneous No. 580, dated 31st January 1873, and Miscellaneous No. 954, dated 15th February 1873.

2. I feel, however, it is a duty I owe to the Revenue Department and myself to bring the following to the notice of Government. Mr. Latham strives to show that the villagers on the line of canal do not avail themselves of as much irrigation as they might because they are ignorant of the rules. This is not correct, for there is not a single Reddi or Curnam in any of the villages affected by the canal who does not know the fundamental rules as well as I know them myself, and I am certain I shall be free of exaggeration if I say that the ryots understand the rules as well as the Reddies and Curnams, and even supposing they did not they have only to ask the Reddies and Curnams for information.

3. Mr. Latham also writes in such a way as if he wished Government to believe that the issue of my order regarding 6 Rupees being charged for chillies had prevented a great deal of cultivation under the canal, and as if the order had been hidden from him till the 14th December 1872.

4. This again is incorrect, for a mistake was only made in one single village, viz., Bilakalagudur, where only a few acres were concerned and where his own Overseer was. This Overseer was not far from the Deputy Collector at the time, and a reference to him would have cleared away all doubt.

5. I think Mr. Latham in giving a translation of his own of a part of my order was in duty bound to have given a history of the order.

6. It was as follows: Mr. Wilks commenced the irrigation settlement with me in April 1872, and after he had commenced it he went to Ceylon on sick certificate and the work was completed by Mr. Crawford and myself. Both these officers maintained that chillies generally require more floodings than six, and that flooding rates should not be allowed for such garden crops. As, however, applications had already been registered for flooding rates as usual, and it did not appear that more than three or four floodings were taken in any case, the settlement was made, with their concurrence, according to the number of floodings taken ; but the ryots were warned that in future no flooding rates would be allowed for chillies, and that the full 6 Rupees rate would be charged like any other wet crop. The order given verbally was then written out and sent to the Tahsildars of the taluqs through which the canal flows, and a copy was at once forwarded to the Irrigation Office. I enclose copies of the original order and a later one and their translations.

7. This all happened when Mr. Latham was in England on leave, and if after his return he was only made acquainted with the order on the da[illegible] he

mentioned, it was either his fault for not looking up the records of his office, or that of Mr. Wilks for not bringing it to his notice earlier.

8. Referring to paragraph 2 of Mr. Latham's letter, dated 14th December 1872, communicated with G. O., No. 415, dated 7th February, I must say that the whole of his statements are incorrect from first to last. I beg to enclose copies of my letters* to that officer, which will explain the true facts of the case. Regarding the land (one acre and odd) irrigated under the Vellala stream it was not the question of remission that was mooted at the settlement but the question of charging the water-rate for the Company or for Government. It was maintained by the Company's Water Superintendent that the canal water flowed into the stream and augmented its supply, and that the cultivation above alluded to was due to the addition of the Company's water. In the absence of other information I decided that the water-rate should be charged to the Company; but subsequent inquiries showed that the statements of the Company's Water Superintendent were altogether opposed to fact, and that the stream itself afforded a perennial supply, which did not fail, even in the hottest months of the year, long after the canal ceased to flow. On these grounds I cancelled my original decision and ordered the water-rate to be charged to Government, and gave due intimation of it to Mr. Wilks. This was a question of principle the decision of which depended upon certain given facts. These facts were misrepresented (unwittingly it may have been) by the Company's Water Superintendent, and when the misrepresentation became known the settlement was annulled. According to Mr. Latham's own dictum, laid down in paragraph 5 of his letter, I do not think he can fairly object to the course I pursued, involving, as it does, "a point of law." But I observe that in paragraph 2 of the same letter Mr. Latham states incorrectly that I ordered the field to be struck out because "the field was naturally wet enough to grow rice though it is admitted rice was never grown there before, and unquestionable that canal water had easy access to the field." This was not, as stated above, why the water assessment was not credited to the Company.

* Dated 10th August 1872, No. 804, and 28th November 1872, No. 1,222.

9. It appears to me that Mr. Latham wishes to throw the whole blame of the small extent of irrigation on the Revenue Officers, and that he ignores the fact that ryots have not yet sufficient confidence in the stability of the canal. A ryot who now gets his certain return from cholum cultivation is unwilling to cultivate rice as a speculation, especially when he knows that in case of failure or excess of water he simply has the land and water assessment remitted but gets nothing to repay him for seed-grain, manure, and expense of cultivation, etc. Another reason for the ryots not availing themselves of canal water is that the charge is so high, 6 Rupees per acre, whereas for all Government water only 4 Rupees is charged. This I have brought to notice in my letter as per margin.

Dated 16th December 1867, No. 376, contained in Board's Proceedings, No. 1,463, dated 4th March 1869.

10. I have no doubt in about ten years' time, if no accidents happen and the ryots have gained confidence in the canal, that the irrigated area under it will increase very greatly. But this must be waited for, and no good can proceed

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from Mr. Latham's endeavouring to show incorrectly that the Revenue officials are at fault. A ryot, as a rule, is as shrewd regarding his own interests as any farmer in any other part of the world, and if he finds he will be the gainer by using canal water and cultivating rice instead of cholum or any other dry crop he will very soon do so. He is, however, conservative, as all farmers proverbially are, and no pressure, whether of the Company or of Government, will induce him to change from one kind of cultivation to another.

SUBMITTED for the information of Government.

No. 4. ORDER THEREON, 1st April 1873, No. 378.

Irrigation, No. 1.

COMMUNICATED to the Department Public Works.

(True Extract.)

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

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

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

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Board of Revenue,

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PROCEEDINGS, 21ST MARCH 1873, No. 427.

Despd 26 March 73
Encl. 3

Received 27th March.

MARCH.

No. 427.

Irrigation Company's Canal.—Letter from Collector of Kurnool remarking on certain statements contained in communications from Chief Engineer of Company on rules connected with supply of water from —, submitted to Government.

W-378.

Comptr. B.R. & C.

Dept. 1873.

Pd. W. Supdt. Rs Unkl 21. 3 of Secs 14.

No 3-4.

C. 29. March/73 R 31. March