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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue

DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.

1201.

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B.P. No.

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Dated

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1201

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
25. May 1875.*

No. 433. Read the following endorsement of the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, dated Fort St. George, 7th April 1875, No. 17 :—

From J. H. LATHAM, Esq., Chief Engineer and Manager of the Madras Irrigation and Canal Company, to Lieutenant-Colonel J. MULLINS, R.E., Chief Engineer for Irrigation, dated Kurnool, 24th March 1875, No. 42.

In reference to G. O., No. 50, of 8th January 1875, I have the honor, at the desire of the Directors, to ask you to place before Government the Board's Minute of 23rd February last, a copy of which I enclose.

2. The Board also desire me to urge the importance, in the interests of irrigation generally, that the ryots should by some means be made to understand that the present charges, fixed by Government after the Meeting of Cuddapah, will not be reduced. If the ryots only once have an idea that by holding out, in their turn, from using the water, they will be able to beat down the price fixed after all the deliberation, circumstance, and public display of the present rates, held forth by the Government and the Company as a formal tender of water-supply, then it will be next to impossible to extend the area now supplied, and even those who have already grown wet crops may contract their irrigation.

3. In contributing the following remarks, I am very anxious to leave nothing unsaid, which it is in my power to say, in order to assist the Government in coming to a successful decision on this difficult matter :—

(1.) In reference to the rate for filling Government tanks, I need scarcely remind you that in my view Rupees 6 being a fair rate for rice, that it is equivalent in average seasons to about 800 cubic yards a rupee delivered on the fields, and to about 1,600 cubic yards a rupee for water stored at the beginning of a season in a tank in which the evaporation will in three or four months approximately equal the water delivered. The supplies given by the canal to Government tanks have generally maintained the tanks with from one to three months' supply in them. If the officers of Government find that they can utilize the canal water by the aid of existing tanks, but in a rather wasteful way, I think that it is at present fair that the canal alone suffer by the waste, until there be an ample demand for the canal water for less wasteful irrigation; and this seems to be the view of the Board, who only ask a reconsideration by the Government, with whom they leave the final settlement of the exact rate to be charged.

(2.) I have few facts to add in reference to the already carefully considered water-rates for general irrigation. I have, however, had the areas of land actually irrigable from existing channels, and also that capable of being irrigated by slight extensions of the channels, carefully got out, except for Surwel and Koileuntla still incomplete.

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I believe this has been done with the greatest possible accuracy, where village maps exist, field by field. The result so far is (in acres) :—

Taluk.	Irrigable.	Commanded.	Total.
	ACRES.	ACRES.	ACRES.
Ramalakota	3,409	344	..
Nundikotkur	72,960	41,359	..
Nundial, Upper	33,343	1,489	..
Do. Lower	16,950	4,587	..
	126,662	47,779	174,441
Sirwell	..	..	100,000
Koilkuntla	..	..	80,000
Total for Kurnool District (say) ..	..	..	354,500
Cuddapah T.	8,499	17,225	..
Prodatoor	8,143	3,460	..
Jummulamadgoo	2,390	..	..
	19,032	20,685	39,717
Grand Total, about ..	..	..	394,000

4. In the Upper Division the proportions of different qualities of land has been carefully completed, and give in *per cent.* of the whole—

Not arable	8	Village sites, &c., about 4 per cent.
Black Cotton	41.1	Roads and vagoos 4 per cent.
Soudoo	1.8	
Poor or shallow	14.0	
Good, mixed	35.1	
	100.0	

5. That is the best description I can yet give of the land immediately affected. From it may be roughly deduced the quantities likely to be in question. The object is to induce ryots to place the better half of the land under cultivation, so as to yield securely 100,000 tons of grain more than the present fluctuating average, and at the same time to maintain the cultivation of the remaining half. They are now placed in such a position, as far as regards the ryots on 200,000 acres of the best arable mixed soil, and black cotton soil, that each ryot, if he be asked for rice at the market rate, will take irrigation and grow it, unless he thinks that by holding out in concert with his neighbours he can obtain a permanent lowering of the water-rate.

6. On behalf of this and similar projects, then, it is of great importance to show firmness in upholding the rates. At the same time it is certainly even more necessary that the rates be made fair and reasonable. Possibly this additional year's experience may have acquainted the Revenue Department with some facts bearing on this.

7. In the early years my impression is that water was applied for for poor land in very large proportion to the good land, though both paid the same rate for water. Water is now, I think, more valued for land already good; but I see no grounds yet for

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suggesting a different water-rate for different soils, while there are many definite objections to it.

8. One deficiency in the rules is striking. There is no inducement to a ryot to compound for a permanent supply, and I am assured that the Directors would agree to a fixed charge of Rupees 5 per acre to take effect from the commencement of irrigation, and to be regarded as a maximum rate, conditional however that the land so cultivated under full irrigation shall continue to be so cultivated year by year. This would not interfere with the present rules; but, if approved by Government, would form an additional rule to meet the convenience of those ryots who might prefer its conditions to those now in force.

9. There are a few small points which might be perhaps improved upon a revision of the rules, *e.g.*, the note to Rule VI. about "levelling and bunding" should perhaps distinctly close the door to any idea of a ryot's being able to get the low rates by a temporary cessation of irrigation for a few years.

10. But whatever other improvements be made let us hope that Government may at least find it possible to remove all known impediments that shall have an influence in restraining general enterprise and even obstructing individual thrift. To fix the rates may prove impossible, however essential to success, but at least the way to obtain water may be thrown open by depriving the Curnums of a monopoly of taking applications for water, and by allowing ryots to apply to the canal officers if they so prefer. It is a sad necessity, if it prove so to be, that obliges a revenue to be given up, which is for aught we know willingly paid. An expensive and prolonged effort to rouse the feeble enterprise of the natives may be rendered nugatory by some insignificant deterring agency, and no such obstructions can be left in the way with impunity.

Extract from Minutes of Proceedings at Meeting of Directors of the Madras Irrigation and Canal Company held on the 23rd February 1875.

THE orders of the Madras Government, Nos. 50 and 51, read at the last Meeting, were again considered, and the following minute was recorded thereon, *viz.* :—

"The Board of Directors have had under their consideration the order of the Madras Government, No. 50, dated the 8th ultimo, and the record of Proceedings which accompanies it. By this order two separate matters are dealt with :—

"(1.) The charge to be made by this Company for water supplied for irrigation purposes to Government tanks, and

"(2.) The propriety of a reduction of the charge for water supplied from the Company's works for irrigation.

"In regard to the first of these, assuming the quantity of water consumed in rice irrigation as stated in the correspondence by the Company's Chief Engineer at 4,840 cubic yards per acre, the rate of charge at Rupees 6 per acre would be about 800 cubic yards per rupee. On this basis, then, it appears that Rupee 1 per 1,000 cubic yards is by no means an unreasonable charge, and that Rupee 1 for 1,440 cubic yards would be the disadvantage of the Company, and this view of the case is confirmed by the Order of Government, No. 984, of 13th September 1873, and by the opinion recently expressed by the Government Consulting Engineer in his letter of the 15th October 1874. If the Government, however, on reconsideration of the question still think that the charge should be Rupee 1 for 1,440 cubic yards, the Directors are willing to accept their decision and assent to a modification of Rule 6 accordingly.

"With reference to the second point, the fact cannot be doubted that the water-rates lately agreed to and promulgated are such as will leave to the cultivators a very liberal balance of the extra profits produced by the use of the Company's water, and such also as these cultivators will

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cheerfully pay provided they are not permitted to indulge in the hope that by refraining from irrigating their lands they may secure to themselves a still further share of those extra profits. The rules were settled after mature consideration on the part both of the Government and the Company, and were regarded as offering full provision to meet the case of ryots desiring to change their cultivation from dry to wet by a reduction of charge during the 1st and 2nd years, when the outlay required to effect such change has to be incurred. In this judgment of the Directors the real cause of the delay in the spread of irrigation is not a question of price but one of convenience and freedom of action on the part of the ryots, and they see no reason to doubt that if the ryots could obtain the water they require simply by direct application to the canal officers, by which delay and the evils inseparable from indirect communication would be avoided, that irrigation would rapidly extend. The Directors earnestly trust that before the coming season the present rule requiring all applications for water to be made to the Curnums, which has been found to operate so unsatisfactorily, will be kindly modified by the Government in the direction suggested. The Directors are persuaded that for the present it would be productive of serious disadvantage to the prospects of irrigation were any proceedings adopted that might tend to unsettle the minds of the ryots, and lead them to a belief that they had it in their own power to force a reduction in the price of the water, irrespective of its value, merely by postponing to use it. The present question is not whether a rate felt to be oppressive shall be reduced, but whether a portion of that which beyond all doubt does not reach over a high charge shall be given up without proof that a reduction will induce a more promptly increasing spread of irrigation, and still more while the rule before mentioned is maintained, which it is admitted by those who have had experience of its working has had a most prejudicial influence by retarding progress.

"(Signed) J. WESTWOOD."

SUBMITTED to Government with reference to G. Os., Nos. 50 and 51 of the 8th and 7th January 1875, respectively.

2. It will be seen the Board of Directors of the Madras Irrigation and Canal Company consider that Rupee 1 for 1,000 cubic yards of water supplied to a Government tank would be a fair rate, but that if on further consideration the Government still think the rate should be 1 Rupee for 1,440 cubic yards the Board will accept their decision.

3. With regard to the reduction of water-rates the Board are unwilling to accede to any further reduction, at any rate until the alterations and adjustments of rates made in 1874 have had a full and fair trial, and they deprecate the allowing it to be in any way supposed that such a reduction is contemplated. They notice the rule under which applications for water must be made to the Village Curnums and advocate its abrogation and the sanction of the submission of applications to Canal Officers.

4. The minor alterations of, or additions to, rules recommended in the letter from the Chief Engineer and Manager, Madras Irrigation and Canal Company, may it is thought await the disposal of the more important considerations. Compounding for permanent irrigation may easily be arranged. The low rates allowable on the commencement of irrigation are not applicable to lands irrigated, then not irrigated and subsequently irrigated again.

5. It will be desirable that all alterations of the rules considered necessary should be brought forward at one time, as frequent modifications will be sure to unsettle the minds of the ryots.

"(Signed) JOHN MULLINS, Lieut.-Colonel, R.E.,
Chief Engineer for Irrigation.

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No. 434.

ORDER THEREON, 25th May 1875, No. 1,430.

IRRIGATION, No. 51.

THE Honorable the Governor in Council does still consider that the charge for water supplied to Government tanks from the Madras Irrigation and Canal Company's Canal should be 1 Rupee for 1,440 cubic yards, and as the Board of Directors have consented to the adoption of this rate the charges for supplies in the past season and in future will be adjusted accordingly.

2. The Honorable the Governor in Council regrets that the Board do not share the views of the Government as to the advisability of lowering the rates for irrigation. The rates as fixed last year will be given a fair trial, and it will be understood that, as they cannot be altered without the concurrence of the Company, no change will be made without due notice being published in the District Gazettes and at the several villages under the canal.

3. The suggestion of Mr. Latham that the cultivators should have the option of compounding for their water-supply at a fixed and lower rate for a series of years is a good one, and the subject will be referred, through the Revenue Department, to the Collectors of Kurnool and Cuddapah in order that they may, after communication with the Company's Manager and Chief Engineer for Irrigation, report for what periods it will be desirable to allow composition, and what rates for the several classes of irrigation would be likely to be popular.

4. It will be better not to attempt to introduce modifications of the rules more than once a year. Such alterations as may be thought by either the Manager or the Revenue Officers to be desirable should be discussed locally, and transmitted for consideration about October, and they can then be disposed of in time to give the ryots concerned notice, three months before the commencement of the irrigation season, of the modifications sanctioned. The Honorable the Governor in Council will be glad to receive any proposals which the Manager and the Revenue Officers think will conduce to irrigation under the canal becoming more popular or which will render the meaning of the rules as they stand more clear.

(True Extract.)

Major, R.E.,

Offg. Secy to Government.

To the Revenue Department

- " District Engineer, Kurnool.
- " " Cuddapah.
- " Chief Engineer for Irrigation.
- " " and Manager Irrigation and Canal Company.
- " Examiner of Railway and Canal Accounts.

Exd. S. T. Austin.

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Rev: 1875-2130
N. 2130

Govt. of 1875 Madras.
PUBLIC WORKS.

THE REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Dated May 25th.

Ishest

June 5th

G. O., 25th May 1875, No. 1439.

MAY.

Nos. 433-434

5 June 75 No 1201 Mr

Rates for water supplied from the Madras
Irrigation and Canal Company's Canal.
Passing orders on the letter of the Chief
Engineer for Irrigation submitting papers
from the Chief Engineer and Manager of the
Company regarding

No 1201 Commence to the
Board of Revenue, who will
obtain and furnish the reports
referred to in para 3 of the
aforesaid order.

14 Ld. O. B. in. O. B. or 10 June

7 months of Revenue 14 June 76
Cm 416 -