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G.O. No.

396

~~Press~~~~B.P. No.~~

Mis.

Dated

26. 2. 1875 196

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No: 4843.

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District Engineer's office

Madras 11th February 1873.

From,

The District Engineer

Madras

To.

The Secretary to Govt.

P. W. D.

Sir,

I have the honor to call your attention to the great and daily increasing difficulties experienced in the maintenance of the Roads of this District, with a solicitation that the Government will be pleased to issue such instructions as they may consider advisable to put an end to the ^{present} anomalous state of affairs in this connection.

2.

In G. O. dated 10th June 1872, No: 1433, the Government have directed that "the margin of the reserves along all roads through Govt. waste should be marked out as soon as practicable at a maximum distance of

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"one chain (22 yards) from the centre line of the Road on each side;" this space of 22 yards has no doubt been suggested in reference to the old fysal accounts in which the same space has been given for the then existing high roads.

3. Now it is obvious to every one that the space of 22 yards from the centre of the road allowed in the fysal accounts is more nominal than real and that in fact it has been allowed to become a mere phrase. Previous to the Roads being transferred to the charge of this Department, the Ryots have been allowed to encroach to such an extent on the road sides that in many cases sufficient space is not left even for the proper drainage of the road, while the Avenue-trees have been in many instances coolly monopolized and are claimed by the Ryots as private property, on the plea that the ground on which they stand is actually included in the Pultah's.

4. As if the action of this Department was not sufficiently hampered by these illegal

illegal though authorized encroachments, the Board of Revenue in their proceedings dated 15th August 1872, No: 1596 put forth orders, among which it is stated that officers of this Department "are not to enter on private land without permission from the owner" and they are held to be liable to be sued personally in the Courts should they venture to "encroach on private land for materials".

5. The effect of this order has been, as I fully anticipated, most unfortunate, and it is vain to conceal from the Govt. the fact that unless it is abrogated or at least modified the functions of this Department will be so fettered that it will be impossible within reasonable limits to keep the roads in good order.

6. The conservation of the boundaries of landed property in this country is effected in a manner which is almost incomprehensible to a European. Miles ^{up} or miles of paddy fields may be seen in which no boundary arrangements present themselves to the inexperienced eye; and yet this land is in most instances minutely divided & subdivided, while each proprietor

proprietor knows his own and his neighbour's boundary almost to a hair's breadth, and each keeps such incessant watch upon the other, that no transgression of boundaries is possible.

7. When however Government land is in the question, the neighbouring private proprietor still maintains his attitude of watchfulness, but in this instance it is in order to encroach stealthily but steadily, bit by bit, so as not to attract attention. And thus it happens that where the property lies by the road side, the extension of that property by encroachments on the part of the owner of that property is only limited by the bare width he is compelled to leave for the actual road itself.

8. It is clear that the officers of the Govt are not sufficiently numerous or busy-eyed to check by mere watching encroachments so craftily conceived & continuously carried out. But we have at hand easy and effective means to counteract the evil effects of these encroachments and these means are the fiscal accounts. Let it be understood in the issue of puttahs that all land lying within the limit of 22 yards of the centre of each main line of road will be liable for the contribution of such material, as may in the District Engineer's opinion, be fairly

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considered necessary for the maintenance of that road, and the difficulty will vanish. There can be no wish for any officers of Govt to injure any man's land unnecessarily. All that I ask is that the prescriptive right of Government, as shown by the fiscal accounts shall not be sacrificed to the detriment of the public for the mere aggrandizement of individuals by recognizing officially the proceeds of private speculation.

I have &c

(Signed). R. A. Roberts Lieut. Col. R.E.

District Engineer Madras

(True copy)

W. T. Riches Lieut. Col. R.E.

District Engineer of Madras.

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Enclosed in a letter
from the District Engi-
neer General to the
Secretary to Government
No 4646 dated 31st Feb-
ruary 1895.

Copy of District
Engineer's letter No 4646
dated 31st February 1895.

Original
No. 476
Revenue 1873 Depart^t

From
The S^t Engineer
Madura
thru P. W. D.

Dated 11: 3 Feb 1/73
Rec^d 19: 3
L. M. S.

Brings to notice
the difficulty experienced
in maintaining the
roads in this S^t

RECORDED.

26 Feb 73
Original
sent to
the P. W. D.
for their consideration