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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

REV DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	2100	Press
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Dated	7-9.1876	196

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

No. 2,121.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 18th August 1876.

Read the following letter from H. W. BLISS, Esq., Acting Collector of Madura, to C. A. GALTON, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Madura, 7th August 1876, No. 294:—

At the request of the District Engineer, I have the honor to forward, for the information of the Board, copy of a letter from that officer remarking on Board's Proceedings, No. 1,770, dated the 11th July 1876, copy of which I sent him for perusal.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From Lieut.-Colonel J. F. FISCHER, R.E., District Engineer, Madura, to H. W. BLISS, Esq., Acting Collector of Madura, dated 2nd August 1876, No. 167.

In returning the accompaniment of your docket, No. 1,712, dated 22nd ultimo, I have the honor to observe that I reported "great distress might prevail in this district this season" when I had observed how the rains had failed after last October, and by comparing the numbers of its population and the ordinary prices of food with other localities. The population here is about 22½ lacs and the ordinary price of rice is 8 seers for the rupee; in the Godavery the population is under 16 lacs and the ordinary price of rice is about 23 seers for the rupee, that is to say, whilst the population in Madura is nearly 40 per cent. more than in the Godavery, the price of food is nearly 200 per cent. higher; it is then quite evident that with any slight increase of prices distress would be very quickly felt in this district as the prices for ordinary labor are not higher here than in the Godavery, and there is nothing to afford the population regular employment such as the works up there supply; and I would add the ryots possessing lands are not the portion of the population which would feel the distress at first, so that the circumstance of their not applying for remissions is no test of the condition of the ordinary laboring classes.

2. My information regarding the irrigation under the Vigay being under 40,000 acres was obtained from Lieutenant-Colonel Oakes' Note on the Perryaur Project printed in G.O. of the 30th April 1875, No. 1,193, and this I presume had been supplied from your office. Colonel Mullins declares that only 30 acres to the square mile of drainage area is obtained in this Presidency; if the Vigay, then a short river as he describes it and only under the influence of the north-east monsoon, actually irrigates over 100,000 acres of land from a drainage basin of some 2,000 square miles of country in which the rainfall is well known to be very scant and uncertain, and the irrigation works are well known to be constructed on the most uneconomical and unscientific manner possible, there is, I respectfully submit, ample grounds for requiring much further investigation into this most important matter, for it is quite evident we are not doing half the work we ought to do with our available means, and from the success of the Nagpore Water Works we have every reason to believe that instead of irrigating only 30 acres to the square mile of drainage area, we ought to irrigate fully seven times as much in ordinary years.

3. In conclusion, I can only repeat what I have so often brought to notice that the half a lakh a-year the Government spend on the irrigation works of Madura is almost waste and must be so, as the expenditure is made in utter disregard of the physical features of the district and its natural rainfall; time and money are both wasted by such proceedings, and the interests of the Government and the people utterly neglected simply to make a show of expenditure when it is very easy with so large a laboring population existing in the district to establish works which would confer lasting benefits on them and be a permanent source of revenue to the State. I have sketched out some half dozen of these for various parts of the district, and if I might spend some of the half lakh for repairs in establishments for investigating these and preparing the necessary surveys, &c., and estimates, a good system of irrigation might be established here in a very few years, and I trust you will be good enough to recommend this proposal to the Board of Revenue.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) H. W. BLISS,
Acting Collector.

SUBMITTED to Government in continuation of Board's Proceedings, dated 11th July 1876, No. 1,770, transferred to the Public Works Department for disposal by G.O., dated 29th July 1876, No. 1,019, Revenue Department.
(True Copies and Extract).

W. J. Lewis
Acting Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department.
Copy to the Acting Collector of Madura.
" to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

Exd. W. J. Lewis.

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BOARD of REVENUE,
MADRAS.

PROCEEDINGS, 18th August 1876, No. 2,121.

20/8/76
Encl.

Received

7. Sept

AUGUST.
No. 2,121.

Originals of Madras District.
Submitting to Government for disposal from Collector
forwarding remarks of District Engineer on
Board's Proceedings on subject of —

Dr. 2000
20/8/76
1876-7-26