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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

REVENUE DEPARTMENT

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Not to be folded or roughly handled.

No. 580. Read the following endorsement of the Chief Engineer for Irrigation,
dated Octacamund, 23rd October 1876, No. 234 W:—

September Reports.

From J. H. LATHAM, Esq., Chief Engineer and Manager, Madras Irrigation and
Canal Company, to the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, Fort St. George,
dated Kurnool, 17th October 1876, No. 103.

I HAVE the honor to forward per book-post copies of the Upper and Lower
Division Engineers' Reports together with my own for the month of September 1876.

MADRAS IRRIGATION AND CANAL COMPANY.
UPPER DIVISION.

Monthly Report for September 1876.

1. *Water.*—The water has been kept up to 5 feet at Soonkesala in the canal, at Kurnool
about 4½ and at Jupand about 4¼. This is very fair; in former years we have not been able to
obtain such a steady level throughout.

Owing to the entire absence of rain in the Kooda and Canaleo rivers the whole of the
water now being sent down to the Lower Division is taken from the Toombudra. It is upwards
of 150,000 cubic yards an hour.

2. *Rain.*—The rain has again been almost nil and more than three-quarters of the dry crops
sown under the canal have withered, the remainder being generally very poor. I believe
elsewhere in the district the failure is much worse.

On account of this scarcity of rain high prices have set in, so that the common food of the
people, "cholam" or "jonna," is now three times the price it was a few months back. This is
very hard on the coolies who live from hand to mouth; and great distress is spreading among
the people. To add to their troubles, whether there is grain or not, it is very difficult to get
commodities and ryots to sell any. The jail is crowded; for there they are well off. Grain robberies
have been constantly occurring; a large amount of intimidation has been used, I believe, with
good effect in the richer villages. It is reported that large bodies of men go to the villagers and
tegg; if they do not get what they want they afterwards take it.

3. *Estimate of Irrigation.*—As may be supposed there is a reversion of feeling with regard
to the canal. We are being overwhelmed with applications to give water; sometimes to villages
very remote and far beyond our reach.

With regard to the total irrigation I estimate as follows for my division:—

	rs.
Up to 30th September including 3rd-class crops, 8,268 Acres at Rs. 3-8-0,	28,938
Under tanks 1,500 " " 6	9,000
	37,938
Add for, say, 5,000 Acres of dry crop at Rs. 4	10,000
	47,938

The estimate of dry crops is very uncertain.

4. *Government Tank Ayacuts supplied.*—The whole of Nundial tank ayacut land, with the
exception of 91 acres, is supplied directly from the canal through the tank bed and sluices.
Upwards of 900 acres are thus saved from destruction. To this must be added the whole
ayacuts of Canalle and Ayavankodur tanks and part of Byup Goodur, making in all upwards of
1,500 acres. Should water suffice we may be called upon to fill the tanks for second crops, but
it is not likely that the river will keep up long in such a year as this.

5. *Special orders on dry crop irrigation.*—The late orders issued to the Government
authorities with regard to irrigating dry crops will, it is hoped, increase the amount of this kind

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of irrigation; for although, according to the exceedingly liberal, the people may be more in favor of all kinds of remission at the water of dealing with the ryots with the liberality of their behalf.

6. *Too late for many crops.*—Beyond the new arrangement is too late to of flooding dry crops in their minds for the last new arrangement a month or two before many made for spreading the supply.

7. *The mode in which dry fields are* which the ryots use the water. They are for flooding or regular rice crops. They money. This fact is much to be regretted irrigation.

8. *Prospects.*—The dry crops already

These villages in which floodings have for for cholera, corra, &c. Applications have all for two important villages lying on the ha myself, in order to see the work carried out eventually, not less than 200 acres per village the ryots themselves in the Nundial Taluk irrigated may perhaps be limited to the area during which the demand will last. It is in the annual repairs and improvements to irrig in every village sufficiently to carry water roads, rocks, villages, &c., had been carried done with much greater effect.

9. *Advantages.*—On the other hand, the lands where the most determined opposition year wet cultivation will rapidly improve and

10. All the most necessary repairs to the well as those on capital account. The only 70 bullock beams have arrived and 30 have from Kurnool to the locks. The raising gear

11. The health of the staff has been rain has made the season unusually hot.

12. The staff were paid from 6th to 2 to send a guard with the salaries as the poor present state of the country. It is also supplies of grain are carried for their use, as

rules and the actual practice, the remissions are inclined to listen to the Tahsildars, who are generally rate settlement, and who will have an opportunity they are naturally inclined to use at all times on

the active exertions of the Revenue authorities, I feel much good. The ryots have had the idea of three months, and if they had been advised of the y fields would have been saved and many arrange-

applied.—Everything depends on the manner in inclined to take too much on all occasions, whether naturally like to have the most they can for their, as they spoil their lands and lay the fault on

irrigated have turned out very well, and several freely* under the canal which are liable to dampness from leakage are above the average-ly been tried were the first to take water again ready been received from the Tahsildar of Nundial of the Koond, and I am hastening to the spot promptly. I am assured by my Overseers that, will require water according to the statements of provided there be no rain. The amount to be which we shall be able to supply in the short time unfortunate that we have not had more to spend on sion schemes. If the system of making channels to every portion separated from others by vagons, out, the work we have in hand could have been

a demand will cause channels to be made into village to irrigation has arisen. It may be that, after this, the prejudice against it give way.

the main canal were completed during the month as exception being the 6th section locks. Altogether been put in place. The remainder are on their way has been entirely remounted on tank supports.

air, a few cases of fever occurred. The absence of

1st September 1876. It will be necessary in future is not afraid to carry money into the district in the very difficult to travel about with servants, unless the roads in villages will not sell anything.

(Signed) C. H. WINKS,
Commissary Engineer.

Lower Division.

Report for the month of September 1876.

1. The works continue in a state of efficiency during the month, a much larger quantity of water than usual has been discharged into the Lower Division in consequence of the drought and the extended irrigation.

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2. According to my instructions I have raised the water; and during my tour up the canal I shall adjust it to the full water level. Nowhere, except in the 10th section, and at one or two locks where the water is purposely kept low to prevent leakage on to paddy-fields for which no application for water have been made, is the water at a less depth than $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet. I find there is no more danger with this depth than with 3 feet. The greater depth seems to have checked the cracking of the banks which this unusually hot weather promotes.

3. I am managing to keep the canals free from weeds, and I hope to prevent so large an accumulation of silt as I had to remove last season.

Since the 10th section has been re-opened—three months—a deposit of 2 inches of silt has been made at the head sluices. It can therefore be assumed that at the end of the season its removal will be a very light and cheap job, enabling me to keep this part of the canal open at least a month later, which will be a great boon to the Indigo Planters.

4. *Irrigation.*—I enclose an abstract return of the ordinary actual irrigation in each range, up to the end of the month it shows only wet crops. I am not irrigating dry crops yet.

5. Ploughing and sowing under the canal is still going on briskly in the Cuddapah taluk and the southern villages of the Prodatoor taluk, which will considerably add to the 1st crop while, in addition, I have yet to receive applications for the usual later floodings in other taluks. I am therefore not in a position to give the extent of 1st crop yet; and unfortunately have not the records in camp with me enabling me to show the increase on the area irrigated in the same month last year. But the increase is much greater than I expected.

6. Nearly all the tanks are quite empty or contain a few pools of water, and with one or two exceptions, until only a few days ago, the land under them has been left waste, the ordinary season for sowing paddy having long expired.

7. The owners of the land were quite willing and anxious to take the canal water; but they run the risk of paying a double water-rate if on their own responsibility they asked for and received canal water.

If they used the canal water, and it so happened that their tank remained empty throughout the season, Government grants a remission of a proportion of the total assessment, but I do not know whether equal to the Company's rate.

8. If on their individual applications they receive water from the canal and after using it for, say, one or two months, their tanks fill, they get no remission from Government, and will therefore pay a water-rate both to Government and the Company. This may not be quite correct, but it is what every ryot believes and says.

9. If the tanks be filled by the canal at the request of the Collector, the ryots have to pay one water-rate in full, and a portion two-thirds of the other, I believe.

10. The fear of this infliction has been the cause of the loss of the paddy crop under several tanks. But the ryots now seem alive to their position, and have run the risk of taking tickets from the Company for an inferior crop, raggy, which they are now sowing under nearly all the tanks the canal commands.

11. Of course by this act the dry assessment is secured to Government if the tank remains dry; but there is a possibility of rain falling and filling the tanks, in the event of which they cannot in the regular course escape the infliction of the double water-rate.

12. The exceptions previously referred to were the Inam lands, the owners of which pay neither dry nor wet assessment to Government, and the ayacut of Chinmacheepally tank. In these cases paddy was sown at the usual period.

13. In seasons when the rains are backward or scanty, it would be easy to arrange for the ryots to sow their crops at the usual time by means of canal water; which water could be relinquished so soon as the tanks receive a supply from rain-fall.

The abandonment of fields could not then take place, and no claims for total remission on account of there being no water would occur. The Company could be paid out of the total

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assessment at the monthly rate for the time water was supplied, and the ryot need only pay the usual amount.

14. I believe it is not generally known that one of the chief reasons why wet cultivation is not carried on so extensively as was first anticipated is the want of manure; paddy requires rich manure and plenty of it. But many of the fields under the canal get nothing more than the leaves and boughs of trees; some fields are manured with the bushes which grow on the canal banks (purchased by the ryots), while several fields get no manure at all.

15. I have not been asked to irrigate a single acre of cotton, cholam, or other dry crop, notwithstanding the failure of the rains. In many villages no dry crops at all are sown, and the villagers, having nothing else to do, employ themselves and their bullocks in tilling the ground until the expected rain should come. They tell me that flooding the fields with canal water will be a good substitute, but they do not avail themselves of it. I believe they do mean to apply, but their procrastinating natures prevent them from acting with judgment and decision; some say nothing can be done except in union with the whole village.

16. In those villages where the dry crops have been sown, they have either perished or are perishing. The ryots say it is too late to take water, they cannot afford the rate, will still wait for rain, and give other reason for not flooding their fields; many ryots seem positively indifferent about their crops.

17. A few acres of field corn and raggy have been irrigated, but not more than last year; they are usually flooded by the canal.

18. In the Cuddapah District the collections of last season's water-rate were made before the present first crops were sown. The considerable increase this season plainly shows that the ryots are satisfied with their outlay and its return.

19. I enclose my monthly rain return. The dryness of the season is almost unprecedented, not a drop of rain has fallen at this station (Admangapally) from the 27th of August up to the 5th of October, and there are no signs of any, although this should be the wettest time of the year.

The country is greatly parched up, and the suffering amongst the real laboring class is great. It is not so noticeable in the villages in which the Reddies and Kurnams reside, but in the little hamlets which are mostly inhabited by people who depend upon their daily labor for their food.

20. I am now in a position to give the total irrigation and water-rate amount in the lower division for last season:—

District	Acres.	Amount.
Kurnool ...	2,128	Rs. 7,440
Cuddapah ...	5,949	19,220
Total ...	8,177	26,660
Adm—Unsettled claims, Kurnool District	309	1,218
Grand Total ...	8,486	27,878

21. I have been delayed in the preparation of the accounts for the Kurnool District owing to the protracted sickness of the clerk who has charge of these accounts, and other causes over which I have no control. There is no reason why the accounts should not be completed (if necessary) and examined within a week after the last day of the settlement.

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22. Concerning the unsettled claims, I have prepared a statement in detail showing the extent irrigated, with particulars as to how the water was obtained.

There will now therefore be no occasion for a long *visa voce* examination, and cross-examination of the Amins.

23. The 309 acres do not represent so many cases, but almost twice the number, as there are only portions of an acre irrigated in many instances; among them there are no *subsoil* cases, these have been carefully separated and recorded in another form.

24. In the early part of the month the Collector of Cuddapah, Mr. Daniel, paid several of the canal villages a visit. The interest he showed in the irrigation has already proved of some benefit.

25. Cholera and fever seems disappearing. There is little sickness about.

My Accountant and Irrigation Clerk who unfortunately have been laid up nearly the whole of the month, seem the only sufferers amongst the whole of my staff.

(Signed) J. O. DUNPHY,

Acting Conservancy Engineer.

CAMP, GOODBOOR,
4th October 1876.

Register of Rain-fall during the month of September 1876.

Date.	Yalloor.	Chintacuntah.	Raoly.	Dhoor.	Admangally.	Remarks.
1st ...						1876. 8.03
2nd ...						1875. 22.32
3rd ...						1871. 53.58
4th ...						1873. 12.08
5th ...						1872. 34.73
6th ...						1871. 12.47
7th ...						1870. 18.63
8th ...						1869. 19.31
9th ...	Nil.					
10th ...						
11th ...						
12th ...		Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	
13th ...						
14th ...						
15th ...						
16th ...						
17th ...						
18th ...	1.20					
19th ...						
20th ...						
21st ...	Nil.					
22nd ...						
23rd ...						
24th ...	00.40			00.19		
25th ...						
26th ...						
27th ...						
28th ...	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	
29th ...						
30th ...				00.19		
Total ...	1.60					

Rein-fall at Dhoor from 1st Jan. to the end of Sept.

(Signed) J. O. DUNPHY,

Acting Conservancy Engineer.

DHOOR,
2nd October 1876.

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Abstract Statement of Irrigation up to end of September 1876.

Range.	Crop.	Extent.
1st Range.	Paddy, chillies and corra ...	1,201 Acres.
2nd do.	do. and chillies ...	600 do.
3rd do.	do. do. ...	386 do.
4th do.	do. chillies, indigo, corra and betel ...	1,445 do.
5th do.	do. indigo, corra and betel ...	2,343 do.
Total ...		6,475 Acres.

(Signed) J. O. DUNPHY.
Acting Conservancy Engineer.

CHIEF ENGINEER'S REPORT.

To accompany the Divisional Reports for September 1876.

The estimated area actually under irrigation on the 30th September 1876 and the revenue due for it is as follows:—

	Rs.
Wet and garden crops 14,748 Acres at Rupees 4, average ...	58,972
Wet crops under tanks 1,500 .. at .. 6, ..	9,000
Dry crops 5,500 .. at .. 2, ..	11,000
Total:	78,972

If the Toombudra supply hold out there will be a second crop under the tanks, and probably altogether a revenue of Rupees 1,00,000 will be reached. That supply is unusually low, though not lower than last year, and if the usual frosh come down when the north-east monsoon, reaches the Western Ghats, it will be very acceptable.

The weather has been generally hot. On the many bright mornings the sun has cast a peculiarly black shadow, reminding one of moonlight; so much so that when driving suddenly into the shade of an avenue it was impossible to see whether the road was clear or not. One-fifth of an inch of rain fell in Kurnool. Dew is unknown. Some localities have been favored by showers; and I suppose that on half the arable land crop has grown above ground; and of this last perhaps a quarter will bear fruit.

The ryots have been holding out in hopes of rain, and persisting in their notion that canal water is not suitable for dry crops and black soil until this month. Then their opposition fast broke down; and such as had any crops left worth irrigating began to take water; yet the majority only gave a conditional promise that they would apply for canal water if the customary 3 or 4 Nandial. I believe that there are few in the Kurnool District who have not given up all hopes.

All the signs of famine at once set in. There is now no market open: but the villagers, even the village police, have to wander from village to village, 5 or 8 miles, with money in their hands, and perhaps then cannot get a full rupee's worth at a time. Chelum is sold in Kurnool at 21 lbs., at Nandial (two days ago) at 30 lbs. the rupee: but not in any quantity you like; and a private servant may lose three hours and half his clothes in the struggle to get his master rice for his day's curry in the bazaar. Groups of 40 or 50 sturdy knaves, armed with heavy sticks, and even with swords and firearms, visit the villages, and extort food from the farmers, two or three men have been killed; and torture of a sinner's wife by making cotton wicks on her fingers is reported. Coolies decline long journeys, further than they can go and return without food.

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Carts, on their owners learning that you will carry a few bags of grain with you, decline your service. The Collector has to make his arrangements for carting and keeping grain to pay his work-people on the relief works as if the grain were gold and the country hostile.

Yet the movement of grain is out of the district. Large quantities are being carried from Kurnool to Gooty, possibly because relief work in Bellary, paid for in money, has raised the prices there. The Nizam has for a month since posted police round his territory, and stopped all export of grain from there.

What a difference would there have been had the canal been navigable! It would then have been impossible that Madrassese should have overlooked this district, and left it to be desolated under the prejudices of country ryots for the sake of saving 2 Rupees an acre water-rate. It would be impossible for the land-owners to close their stores and raise grain to an artificial price if the canal were navigable; for they could not then be, as at present it is, 15 lbs. a rupee at Kurnool and 33 lbs. a rupee at Madras. Moreover, the Collector, by simply showing a store of grain at Cuddapah, and threatening to pay relief works with it, would lower prices all over the district; whereas now he must have many stores scattered in every taluk village.

At the end of the month I received the news that the Madras Government would release the Company from payment of remission on dry crops failing from causes beyond the Company's control, and would themselves remit to ryots the full water-rate on dry crops unless a successful crop were got. The Revenue authorities assented; at the same time prognosticating that it would not answer, and intimating that failure was readily attributable to the Canal officers; and it seemed, at first, as if these opinions would meet with a ready echo from their subordinates. However the Deputy Collector has set to work with a will, and apparently with some hope, already realized by his success in many cases where he has encouraged ryots, by explaining the new terms, to make up their minds and irrigate while their crops are still worth irrigating. Much cannot be expected from the Tahsildars, indeed it is lucky if they understand the Government Order aright, busy as they are with the work now thrown on their hands, but the Revenue Inspectors and the Canal officers will make every effort to induce ryots to utilize the boon put in their way.

I enclose a statement showing that the present rules for supplying canal water and the rates do not in all cases seem to be the cause of ryots not taking the water. The tanks under the canals have been particularly favored by the rules. They are filled, if the ryots wish it, by canal water at a rate equivalent to Rupees 4 an acre for wet crop, instead of Rupees 6, the general rate, and in this case are entirely removed from canal management. If the ryots request the Collector to fill the tank, he applies for water for them; and the measurement of their lands, the remissions, and, in fact, the whole settlement, is then removed from the Company's co-operation entirely, and is conducted only by Revenue officers. But the ryots, if they like, can, when the nature of the ground admits, come direct to the Company's officers, and take water directly from the canal at the general rates without going to the Collector; but if they do so they remain liable to the tank rates in addition to those of the canal, just as if they had not taken canal water, but depended only on the tank. The statement includes all the tanks, all, or any part, of whose ayacut (or irrigable land) is under the canal; except those which are obstructed, or interfered with, by the canal, which come under other special conditions. It shows a total of—

	ACRES.
Tank ayacut irrigable by canal water ...	2,003-20
Do. irrigable whose ryots applied to the Collector for water from the canal at 1,440 cubic yards the rupee.	NIL.
Do. irrigable whose ryots came directly to the canal officer for water at general rates ...	2,370-00
Irrigated from the tanks natural supply ...	100-00
Unirrigated ...	533-20

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On the 4th instant I started from Karnool for Ayaloor, 49 miles from Karnool by the road. From the outskirts of the village of Kalloor, in which Karnool lies, to the Koondaur river, a distance of 45 miles, the country was a remarkable picture of desolation. For a breadth of 5 miles on this side Nannur some local showers seemed to have been energetically made the most of. Half a dozen fields of regular 1st crop were ripe; and in more a comparatively recent sowing still possesses life and vigour. In other places the open, black plain, usually at this time of year covered 6 or 8 feet thick with crops, showed no green thing smaller than a shrub or tree; except where artificial irrigation, or the neighbourhood of springs, kept a few fields flourishing. Near Panam, for 6 or 7 miles, a good deal of land had been recently sown and the seeds have since come up. On passing the Koondaur I came into a district nearly covered with young crop, interspersed with fields of rice flourishing under the Company's channels. Of the former some of the fields are already being grazed off by their owners, hopeless of getting any crop.

On the 5th, I and Mr. Wells had a conference with the Deputy Collector at Ayaloor. He had received the Government Order suspending the water-rate for dry crop irrigation—No. 1,329 of 23rd ultimo and the Board of Revenues Proceedings thereon—and had issued to the Tahsildars the following instructions. The Tahsildar was to take applications from ryots for dry crop, the Curnams and Company's officers as hitherto those for wet and garden crops. The Tahsildar would apply to the Canal Overseer and Amin to supply the water for dry crops. He also issued instructions to the Tahsildars to visit all villages under the canal and to receive the applications of ryots for canal water for the irrigation or sowing of dry crops, taking applications on a register to be signed by each applicant. The restriction of applications to entire fields, or to at least one acre if the field were larger than an acre, was not to be enforced. Where no made channels exist, the Company would have to excavate them at the shortest possible notice. No channels, however, were to be unnecessarily made, and the Tahsildar would see that the ryots used them when made. The channel would be led by the Company to the chief points in the village, and from thence the ryots would take the water to their fields. Ryots who should raise a fair crop will have to pay Rupees 2 an acre besides land assessment, and the settlement will be made by Government officers alone in very liberal terms.

I was very glad to find the instruction of the Revenue Board of 27th ultimo, paragraph 2, so forcibly interpreted and laid before the Tahsildars, to whom also the full Proceedings were sent, which (in paragraph 3) instruct the Collector to take steps to supply seed-grain if required.

I was also glad of the opportunity of stating what action the Company would take in the matter, and of giving a caution likely to save much waste of time. I informed the Deputy Collector that the settlement (so called in the sanctioned rules, and there is no other name for it, though it is, I presume, not the settlement referred to in the Board of Revenue's resolution) between the Company and the Government would be conducted in the same way, and on similar record of the irrigation demanded by the Government and supplied by the Company as usual, and that the Company desired to be as liberal in allowing the Government remission in respect of failure of supply of water as ever; though the Government in their Order, No. 1,329 of 23rd ultimo, resign claim of remission merely due to failure of dry crop. That the Canal officers would continue to take applications to the Curnams as the rules require. That the Company would make any requisite channels, not only to salient points in the villages within their system, but would complete all but the smallest field channels, at least as much as their staff under perhaps an extensive and instantaneous demand could do, and were also willing to accept tenders made by Curnams of a village, or any of the respectable inhabitants, for the completion of such channels at a liberal rate per cubic yard of work, and that such tenders should be accepted at the recommendation of a Tahsildar. I also gave him an important caution. All the villages fully commanded by the canal have been again and again canvassed to get the ryots to apply; and it is but natural that, when this further canvass is to be made, Tahsildars will first open new ground, and go to villages on the outskirts of the irrigable area, where they will be most

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successful in getting applications. This tendency appeared in the Deputy Collector's own report* on nearly a dozen villages he had just visited without any present success. This

* No. 125 of 4th October.

report read as if the channels of canal were, as a rule, conspicuous by their absence in the irrigated district. He had canvassed Pussulur, a village most of which is on a gentle eminence cut off from the canal, lying between the Koondaur river and a bye-wash imperfectly shown in the Taluq maps. The village becomes an island in high floods; next he took Chaparevula, a village consisting of lumpy and most difficult ground, much intersected by deep water courses; Nundial, in which almost all except the tank land is inaccessible, and so on. I recommended that the Tahsildars should first canvass the ryots owning the 150,000 acres of land thoroughly supplied with a complete system of channels, at first needing more field channels. The Deputy Collector also pointed out that by the Board's Resolution every field yielding "fair" crop, which in revenue parlance means a half crop, was to pay Rupees 2 water-rate an acre. This he said was not a "successful" crop, and would not as a rule pay the ryot for enhanced cost of cultivation, land assessment, and water-rate. He wished he could promise remission of the Rupees 2 for all crops below a $\frac{3}{4}$ crop. I told him, on reflection, that I had no scruple on the subject, because paragraph 1 of the Board's Resolution satisfies the condition required in the Government Order, so far as I am concerned; and that I should therefore be justified in considering it established that no crop less than "successful," of which I accepted his estimate, of $\frac{3}{4}$ a full crop, should pay the water-rate. Moreover, I do not know that the Board in using the word "fair," used it in the technical meaning of "half." Of course my interpretation would carry no official weight, and could in no way embarrass the action of the Revenue authorities.

On the 7th I pitched camp in Gampamalla, Koilkootla Taluq, in the Karnool District, opposite the 125th mile of canal and about 5 miles distant, on the banks of the Koondaur. On entering the taluq, 5 miles short of the village, on my road from Ayaloor, every trace of vegetation ceased, except on the very few trees, and here and there on greenish grey patches of squitah, the farmer's peat here as in England. Beautiful lakes of mirage, and a very hot sun, made these extensive black plains look most desert-like. I may mention that the bazaars at Nundial had closed for cholera before I left Ayaloor, and the Tahsildar was commencing daily sales of small quantities to support the inhabitants.

I sent to the Tahsildar of Koilkootla (whose village lay about 6 miles from my camp) to come over next day and commence his canvass for applications. He readily consented to come, having just received the letters of instructions from the Deputy Collector to the effect I have described above.

A word as to why I selected the taluq of Koilkootla and these villages of Gampamalla and its close neighbour Kristipaud, for my visit. I have an impression that the ryots thereabouts are amongst the most well-to-do and most educated (though they be illiterate) in the district, and have the most energy and individual character. The amount of these talents they misapply in law proceedings is striking.

Years ago I happened to pass through Koilkootla shortly after there had been an urgent call for the Company's Apothecary at Ayaloor to attend some one in the neighbourhood. An influential deputation from some man of consequence had come to Ayaloor to ask his immediate attendance, and finding him out in camp had at once gone after him and obtained his attendance, and this I mentioned to the then Tahsildar, with some expression to the effect that the Company were desirous that their medical officer, when free from their own calls, should render assistance to all who needed it. He smiled, and said it was a land quarrel between two influential men; in the course of which one, in expelling the other from a field, had hit him over the shin with a stick; and the latter was in search of medical evidence for an action for assault with intent, &c. He added that it was the most litigious taluk he had been in, and that men would spend thousands of rupees in contesting a mere foot of ground. The high assessment, viz.,

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Rupees 4 an acre, results in high farming; which is an education in itself. The Tahsildars, called locally by the more dignified title of Amildar, seem to support a credit for administrative vigour and intelligence which descends from one to the other, or is contracted from the character of the neighbourhood; which applies both to knowledge of agricultural interests, and to management of public plantations, avenues, and markets, superior, I have thought, to average Tahsildars.

But the point of most importance is that these wealthy villages, though bisected by a channel, then full of canal water, commanding half of their land, and that of the best friable sepia-colored soil, have petitioned for relief works. They have wasted no money in attempting to get any crops; they have not irrigated an acre, and they actually refuse to sell their own people grain; so that their labourers' class have, when their own stores are exhausted, to go 6 miles to Koilkootla to buy grain at a bazaar kept open by the Tahsildar. That Magistrate has, by the best means he can use, to compel (if I may use his term) the villages around to contribute a couple of loads of cholam grain a day, in turn; for which a Koilkootla soucar, by an arrangement with the Tahsildar, pays full market price, and which he sells in small quantities daily to the poor of these neighbouring villages, whose wealthy neighbours otherwise refuse to supply them.

The same evening I went into Kristipaud, ascertained that the ryots had next to no hopes of rain, recommended them to apply for water all together; told them that Government had arranged for their having water free, without water-rate; only that where really good crops were got, say three-quarters of a full crop or more, then Rupees 2 per acre would be collected on those crops only, in addition to the land tax. I took care that the labourers as well as the landholders got a very sufficient notion of the proposal, so as to secure their importunity on my side; searched out an enterprising man, Sooba Reddy, who had been an earthwork contractor for the Company, and was one of the most influential men, and engaged to give him all the channel work required to irrigate the villages which I indicated would be extensive and require a great many men, and enlisted him heartily on my side, and left matters in an hopeful a form as I could.

Next day the Tahsildar came, and read to all the people of Gampamalla and Kristipaud, assembled at my tent, the letter of instructions he had received. I may say that he recommended beginning with Hariwaram, a neighbouring village on high ground, barely touched by our channels; but I explained this to him, and said that while I was willing personally to guarantee that the Company would flood the whole of the 2,000 acres in Kristipaud and Gampamalla below the channel, in a fortnight I must leave the hundred acres or so irrigable in Hariwaram to my overseers. This was merely the old tale. At Ayaloor I was besieged with applications from villages above the canal level; they seem always ready to apply. After the reading, the labourers, who sat in an outer ring and heard the whole, said "only give us seed and we are ready to take the water and sow." These men had no land. They meant that they were willing to take seed from the landholders, in the usual way, probably on condition of paying half the crop to the landowners, or of selling him the whole at a fixed rate of about half its real value and themselves pay the water-rate. Everything depended on the landowners giving way. The Tahsildar then left me, and held an assembly in the village chavadi (or court-house) till evening. Next morning he returned early, and continued the assembly till 2 p.m., the labourers standing round and adding their entreaties. At 3 p.m. he came to me and said it was of no use. He thought that the landowners relied on getting remission of land tax if they left their fields waste, as their tax had been remitted in a recent year in the neighbouring taluk near Pypully; though he explained to them that Government, after bringing them canal water at a great expense, and thus depriving them of all excuse for not cultivating, since there was water enough and to spare, would not be likely to remit their land tax of 4 Rupees an acre. As he left me a knot of about 150 half starved labourers, who had followed him and had squatted at a respectful distance under a tree, rose and gave one despairing cry, and returned with a most desponding and wretched aspect to their village. Before them and

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their families, old and young, they knew what a year of pain and wasting and death now lies. Unprotected by any poor law, unable to buy or to borrow even on a pledge of servitude, they have no resource; and the action of a foreign Government is their only hope.

It was a sad scene; and full as sad was the thought of the night that seemed to exist in the hearts of the landowners in the midst of whose houses their poor fellow villagers were to suffer from day to day. Sooba Reddy alone of them voted for irrigation; but, as he said, one man could not irrigate alone; for his crop could not be defended, and would be certainly cut and carried by some gang of robbers; and that seems true enough, for in Vellapanoor and elsewhere, where an isolated crop is ripening, the owners say they would gladly give half to be secure of the other half, and gangs of forty or fifty armed men are wandering about the country, with their faces blackened, "begging."

On my return to Ayaloor yesterday (10th) I found that the Deputy Collector had made progress right through the centre of the irrigable villages in the 6th section, and with considerable immediate success. One result apparently was that a panic seized several villages lest the water should run short, they diverted so much water that some of the channels at the lower end of the section had stopped running, so Mr. Wilks has gone to the spot this morning (11th) to try to introduce order; and he hopes to get the assistance of the Tahsildar. It is quite worthy of consideration whether some powers should not be given to canal officers, similar to those granted to Railways, to prevent interference with water-supply. This interference is causing Mr. Dunphy a great waste of time, if it have not caused loss of crops, in the Cuddapah taluk.

The Government are about to start relief works in various parts of the district, where any able to crawl to them will be given assistance. I am very glad to be able to report that payments at these works will be made in grain, imported from a distance, and not in money. It is to relief works paid in money in past years that the "famine," so far as can be learnt, is due. Doubtless the aristocracy of these Koilkootla villages are embarking in a commercial contest, at an expense of the sufferings of their vassals, with all the eagerness and as little remorse as rival barons of old engaged in quarrels. They wish to retain a grain stored till their neighbours or smaller villages are exhausted; and are pleased if they can by driving away population, or by deceiving the Tahsildars or the bands of beggars, cause their neighbours to be forced to diminish their stores. Their villages are well stocked with fodder.

The Company's staff are already put to great inconvenience to get food. It is of no use having money when village owners are refusing food even to those of their own village who offer money for it. Had it not been for the prospect of grain being brought in by the Government I should need to have obtained a supply for distribution.

(Signed) J. H. LATHAM,
Chief Engineer and Manager.

ORDER THEREON, 21st March 1877, No. 992.

Lieut.-Col., R.E.,
Secretary to Government, P.W.D.

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THE CHIEF ENGINEER FOR IRRIGATION.

Dated March 21st.

For

Recd. 14 April 77

S. O. 114 1877, A.

15-50 to 11-50

MARCH

No. 530-531

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Comm to the
Board of Rev

16 April 77.

Notes of the Chief Engineer for Irrigation
submitted monthly report for the month
1877 of the 1st, 1877.

15-50 to 11-50