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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

18th June 1877, No. 267 W.

Buildings and Roads.
Civil Works.

Read the following paper :—

No. 175, Endorsement of the District Engineer, Nellore, dated 6th June 1877, No. 779.

From Lieutenant C. B. HENDERSON, R.E., Executive Officer, Iskapully Division, to J. O'SHAUGHNESSY, Esq., District Engineer, Nellore, dated 12th April 1877.

I HAVE the honor to report on the progress made with the East Coast Canal in the Iskapully Division up to date.

2. RAMATHURTHAM SUB-DIVISION.—The division is about 45 miles in length, and ground was broken at the south end on the left bank of the Pennair river on the 28th of November last. The number of coolies increased rapidly under the management of Mr. H. B. Hutchings, Assistant Engineer, until from 7,000 to 8,000 were employed over a length of about five miles. This section has the heaviest cutting in the length of 25 miles north of the Pennair, the depth being from 15 to 16 feet. The whole of this cutting has been completed to full section. Immediately north of the Pennair great difficulties have been encountered in keeping down the water, and the excavation has therefore been much delayed. On this section a large number of Cuddapah and Bellary coolies have been employed since December. I beg to draw your attention to the excellent service rendered by Anicut Superintendent S. Ramiah, Acting Overseer.

3. ISKAPULLY SUB-DIVISION.—The next sub-division has been in charge of Lieutenant Digby, R.E., the Officer in Command of the Company of Sappers. Cholera prevailed at Iskapully for some weeks and the work languished. Since the disease has left about three miles of canal have been completed and a portion through the Pyderu backwater, which was expected to give much trouble, has been easily completed.

4. RAMAPATAM SUB-DIVISION.—North of the Chippaleru the heaviest cutting, some five miles in length and from 10 to 12 feet deep, has been nearly completed by Mr. A. S. Russell, Assistant Engineer. A very large amount of earthwork has been done in this sub-division. The coolies employed all belonged to the Nellore District; and they worked steadily and well.

5. KAREDU SUB-DIVISION.—North of Ramapatam about two miles of ground in the Karedu Sub-Division have been opened by Mr. Supervisor Smith with about 5,000 coolies. The work is all in sand and the upper two yards are easily taken out; below spring level I anticipate meeting with considerable difficulty in continuing the excavation.

6. The system of working I have introduced has answered well. The rates for earthwork are below the estimate and compare favorably with what would be given to a contractor in ordinary years. Each family has a separate task marked out, the

size of the task depending on the number of diggers in the family, and it is arranged to occupy them from 16 to 24 working hours. As soon as the task is excavated to one yard in depth it is measured and paid for. The Nellore coolies are well satisfied, and on moonlight nights they may be found hard at work.

7. When the number of coolies in a sub-division increases beyond the powers of the staff, contractors are appointed; they take up a few chains' length of the canal at a time, and they are obliged to treat their coolies fairly to prevent them from deserting to the adjacent piece-work. A good Overseer can manage from 2,500 to 3,000 coolies on piece-work; unfortunately but a few of the Overseers can level or know any native language.

8. The Sappers have been very useful in setting out work and in petty superintendence. They are perhaps too careful and anxious to make the slopes look neat.

9. Cooly camps have been established along the line at intervals of four or five miles. When cholera was about the camps were not popular; they are now fully occupied.

10. At the south end of the line supplies failed, and grain payments were made elsewhere the local markets have been sufficient and only cash has been paid.

11. The Cuddapah coolies sent to the canal have not proved of much use. They are most difficult to manage, and as soon as they get paid they run away. Few of them belong to the laboring classes, and they have an invincible dislike to working in water. Bellary coolies do better, but they are very quarrelsome. The Cuddapah coolies seldom earn the value of the subsistence allowance issued to them. Some of the immigrants have taken to piece-work and have earned good wages. The majority do as little as they possibly can.

12. I have much pleasure in bringing to your notice the work done by Messrs. Hutchings and Russell, Assistant Engineers. These two officers have never spared themselves, and by their personal example they have effected a great deal considering the amount of cholera, small-pox, and other diseases, and the privations the Canal Officers must necessarily undergo. I think that services of these two officers deserve the highest commendation.

SUBMITTED, for the information of Government, to the Chief Engineer, Public Works Deparment.

2. This memorandum was written on the occasion of Lieutenant Henderson giving charge of the Iskapully Division to Mr. Brooks, Executive Engineer of the Bengal Public Works Department.

3. The District Engineer fully concurs in Lieutenant Henderson's commendation of Messrs. Hutchings and Russell. These young officers have worked, not only better than was expected from their inexperience, they have worked uncommonly well; they have day and night, in sickness and health, faced and fairly overcome serious difficulties with patience, courage, and perseverance, which deserves the highest credit.

4. Anicut Superintendent Ramiah's services have been favorably noticed by Government on a previous occasion (*vide* G.O., dated 22nd November 1875, No. 3,331). He has been temporarily employed on the canal from the beginning, and his assistance in starting the work was invaluable. He wishes to be a Taluq Overseer for which he is practically well qualified, but he has not passed the required college test. If he can be exempted from this test he well deserve the concession.

5. There have been difficulties, disappointments, and troubles in connection with the progress of the canal; but on the whole the progress so far will, it is hoped, be considered satisfactory. Thirty-six out of the forty-five miles which compose the Iskapully Division are likely to be opened throughout for traffic before the end of this month, and there is a large hole in the remaining nine miles; there is, therefore,

some ground for claiming a certain amount of success in carrying on the work, and whatever success is admitted in this respect is entirely owing to Mr. Henderson's untiring labor and exertions in its management, and the District Engineer requests that Mr. Henderson's services may be brought to the favorable notice of His Grace the Governor in Council.

(Signed) J. O'SHAUGHNESSY,
District Engineer, Nellore.

No. 176. ORDER THEREON, 18th June 1877, No. 267 W.

RECORDED.

2. THE Government notice with satisfaction the exertions of Lieutenant Henderson, Mr. Hutchings, and Mr. Russell.

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R.E.,
Secretary to Government, P.W.D.

To the District Engineer, Nellore.
" Revenue Department.
" Chief Engineer for Irrigation.

Exd. T. D. Ryan.
14 Spare Copies

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BUILDINGS AND ROADS.
CIVIL WORKS.

Govt. of 1877 Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

To

THE DISTRICT ENGINEER,
NELLORE.

&c., &c., &c.

Mis. GO. 11 July 1877 N° 3878.

Dated June 18th.

Read 9 July Encl

G. O., 18th June 1877, No. 287 W.

JUNE.

Nos. 175-176.

Mis N° 3878

11 July/77

East Coast Canals. The report of progress made up to 12th April in the Iskapully Division of the — recorded, the exertions of Lieutenant Henderson, Mr. Hutchings and Mr. Russell noticed with satisfaction.

To Board's Service G.D. 11 July 1877