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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.
B.P. No.

477

Press
Mis.

Dated

1. 2. 1877

197

Not to be folded or roughly handled

477

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department
1st February 1877.

No. 5. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 6th January 1877:—

Read the following letter from A. WEDDERBURN, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore, to H. E. STOKES, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Coimbatore, 30th December 1876, No. 268.

LEARNING that there is some difficulty in finding employment for the thousands of distressed people in the Bellary District, I have the honor to bring to the notice of the Board of Revenue certain correspondence which, as Collector of Bellary, I had with the Board and Government in the famine year of 1866.

2. I advocated the commencement of the Upper Bellary irrigation scheme, so far as the earth excavation for the canal was concerned, as being suitable for famine relief, and being all marked out it could have been commenced on.

3. It was then, however, uncertain that this scheme, which was in the hands of the Irrigation Company, would be carried out.

4. I had many conversations with the Company's Chief Engineer, Mr. Gordon, on the subject. The hitch in the work, so far as the Company were concerned, was that it was thought necessary that the upper canal should irrigate two crops; and for this some gigantic upper reservoirs in Mysore were contemplated. I could never see the need of such conjunction of enterprises. One-crop water would have been sufficient to supply the town of Bellary with water and to irrigate an extent of land as far as the water sufficed, and under the banks of the canal numerous wells could have been sunk, and by natural percolation have irrigated a considerable amount of land. A drinkable water might have been supplied to the people instead of their own brackish well-water. The treeless surface of Bellary Taluq might have been improved by plantations.

5. But as the Mysore reservoirs were held as a *sine qua non*, nothing was done, and an inferior line of irrigation was carried out above the town of Kurnool down a valley which I, as Collector of Cuddapah in 1860—63, noticed to be well supplied, or at least better than any other part of the adjoining districts.

6. The difficult part of the Upper Bellary scheme lay between the Daroje Tank and the head of the channel. I walked over this ground with Mr. Monier and the Engineers of Government and the Company in 1867; trial pit had been dug to show the substratum and the floor of the canal; there was nothing which would have deterred a Railway Engineer from all the cutting required. I believe some of the rocky cutting in the six miles was reckoned at £30,000 a mile, not grudged for a railway cutting at Home. A railway is made to pay; but though it carries grain, it cannot produce it; the canal could do both. And in America the scheme would have been carried out long ere this with borrowed money. I argue that the scheme would have paid, because in 1863 the people of the town were actually purchasing water to drink. The cavalry were ordered out of the station; the native regiments were receiving immense sums as compensation for dear food; the people of the town were seriously contemplating abandoning it for a better situation near the Toongabudra River, water was valued as it never seems to have been in the Koondar Valley under the lower

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4. I had many conversations with the Company's Chief Engineer, Mr. Gordon, on the subject. The hitch in the work, so far as the Company were concerned, was that it was thought necessary that the upper canal should irrigate two crops; and for this some gigantic upper reservoirs in Mysore were contemplated. I could never see the need of such conjunction of enterprises. One-crop water would have been sufficient to supply the town of Bellary with water and to irrigate an extent of land as far as the water sufficed, and under the banks of the canal numerous wells could have been sunk, and by natural percolation have irrigated a considerable amount of land. A drinkable water might have been supplied to the people instead of their own brackish well-water. The treeless surface of Bellary Taluq might have been improved by plantations.

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6. The difficult part of the Upper Bellary scheme lay between the Darojeo Tank and the head of the channel. I walked over this ground with Lord Napier and the Engineers of Government and the Company in 1867; trial pit had been sunk to show the substratum and the floor of the canal; there was nothing which would have deterred a Railway Engineer from all the cutting required. I believe some of the rocky cutting in the six miles was reckoned at £30,000 a mile, not grudged for a railway cutting at Home. A railway is made to pay; but though it carries grain, it cannot produce it; the canal could do both. And in America the scheme would have been carried out long ere this with borrowed money. I argue that the scheme would have paid, because in 1866 the people of the town were actually purchasing water to drink. The cavalry were ordered out of the station; the native regiments were receiving immense sums as compensation for dear food; the people of the town were seriously contemplating abandoning it for a better situation near the Toongabudre River, water was valued as it never seems to have been in the Koondar Valley under the lower

irrigation, navigation scheme, where the ryots do not seem to care for the water, but which is to be bought by Government for their use.

7. The only objection I have heard now stated to the Upper Bellary scheme is that perhaps the Toongabudra River will not be able to supply an additional upper channel; there are, however, floods and freshes which would have been held by the stupendous reservoirs if they had been constructed, and on those occasions the water passes from the lowest Anicut into the sea. This water might be stored in the Darjee and other tanks which could be formed for its retention. There would have been local storage and use of the water instead of river-head storage. The climate of the Bellary Taluq would be considerably relieved of its aridity by this artificial irrigation, and rainfall might become more frequent, as it does when humidity is produced in former arid tracts of country by canals.

8. I understand from the returns published that there are upwards of 50,000 people obtaining relief by works at Bellary; that there are, or were, something like 50,000 in the vicinity of its chief town. How these can execute any profitable works seems to be a matter of difficulty; there are too many for road-making, which is almost the only way of employing multitudes. But as I when Collector in 1866, when I had only 6,000 people in the vicinity of the chief town to provide work for, which was done with utmost difficulty (i.e., they were too many to be employed on the roads in the vicinity of the town, and they could not be camped out) and without adequate results, advocated the commencement of the earthwork excavation of this upper irrigation scheme, so I would again bring it to notice when a still larger number of people requires to be maintained on relief wages.

9. It is not the mere acreage that will be watered nor the percentage of return for the money, which at first would be gradual and in the course of years more remunerative, that should only be considered. Many agricultural improvements are made that return profits at distant periods. If Bellary Taluq were secured, or even a portion of it, it would be an oasis, or land of Goshen in the time of dearth; cattle might be saved; even a partial irrigation has a marked influence in saving a district, and there is no other source of irrigation possible.

10. I would have advocated sinking wells as a relief in 1866, but that the wells which were sunk through the limestone soil produced a white liquid, like milk, of an abominable taste as I experienced by personal trial.

11. A difficulty about the upper project existed in 1866, which can hardly exist now; the Company had a concession of the river; they can hardly have such now, when Government pay the interest of some two millions sunk on a scheme which hardly pays its working expenses.

12. In the interest of the people and of Government I advocate the enlargement of the upper channel at Wobblapoor on the Toongabudra and leading the canal through the rocky cutting to the Darjee Tank, and thence by an excavated canal to Bellary. At all events, it might be worth while to submit the matter with a professional opinion to the Government of India, as famine relief must be met out of Imperial Revenues, and the question of their application would rest with that Government.

13. Other expensive irrigation schemes have been sanctioned by Government which are good, but have paid no interest on the capital as yet. There is

the Strivengoondum Anicut estimated 7 lakhs cost 10 lakhs, over the Tambrapurny in Tinnevely District, low down the river, and only capable of utilizing surplus water, of which, owing to dry years, there has not yet been any. Once in a generation there is a disastrous flood, such as swept away Soolochanam's Bridge at Tinnevely, but not a continuous surplus. Here, on the contrary, instead of being at the tail of an exhausted river, the proposed channel has the whole, and first, command of the never-failing Toongabudra River, which, in the disastrous year of 1866, when the rest of the district of Bellary was a barren waste, irrigated its usual expanse of rice and sugar-cane crops, so that one, as it were, in a few miles passed from a region of dearth into a land of plenty. There can be no doubt whatever of the irrigated canal proposed paying. Whether it pays in the first year, or even in the fifth, or what interest it pays, is a subordinate question. Having a command of water it must pay from the very first some dividend. Irrigation works pay gradually as more and more land is adapted for irrigation. In this instance, instead of there being a line of drainage as in the Koondar Valley irrigated by the lower canal scheme, where the Koondar, with its affluents from the drainage of the Nallamalai Hills, influences at least the under-ground supply, which can be tapped by wells, and which renders the supply of irrigation water to the ryots of less importance and value, it is the only possible source of supply. No ryot, when he can get well-water at a cheap rate by his own labor, or rain enough to water a dry crop, will pay Rupees 6 in cash per acre per crop to an irrigation company in perpetuity. In the first instance irrigation is not so good for cholera and black cotton soil as rain; and the line of the Toongabudra River is seen indicated in the south-west monsoon by clouds following the river, and being arrested by the Nallamalai chain of mountains at right angles to the river, rain falls at Kurnool, when not a drop visits either Bellary or Cuddapah.

14. The superiority of the Upper Bellary Project is thus shown by its being able to command an utterly unwatered tract instead of what, as in the Koondar, was a fertile valley; fertile, because there was water under the surface and a tolerable rainfall. The finest land is waste where neither rain nor irrigation is available; but because two millions have been unprofitably sunk in a project in which the Revenue Officers of the districts affected were never consulted, it does not follow that a more promising scheme should be condemned; it cannot equal the expense of the unsuccessful work of the lower channel, while (though with heavy rock cutting for several miles) the command of water is greater and the value of water to the land to be watered is of much greater importance; water, like every other necessary commodity, being valuable in exact proportion to its scarcity.

SUBMITTED for the consideration of Government.

2. The scheme known as the Upper Bellary Project has been investigated. Its success as an investment is not proved; and under ordinary circumstances this would be sufficient to warrant hesitation in commencing it. In the present condition of the district, which renders necessary an enormous outlay, the question whether the expenditure might not be more profitably made on this matured

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
1st February 1877.*

scheme than on endless miles of road deserves the serious consideration of Government. Of its suitability as a famine work there can be no doubt, and though it might not give an adequate return on the outlay, its execution will not only provide employment, but it will alter the face of the country through which it passes, and will ensure it against famine for the future, to say nothing of its bringing a perennial water supply to the populous town and important military post at Bellary. The further report on the financial aspect of the question called for in Board's Proceedings recorded with Miscellaneous G.O., dated 1st February 1876, No. 260, has not been received, but sufficient information is available to warrant, under the present exceptional circumstances, the commencement of the work.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) H. E. STOKES,
Acting Secretary.

No. 6.

ORDER THEREON, 1st February 1877, No. 477.

Irrigation, No. 1.

The Government have more than once had under their consideration the Upper Bellary Project, and adhering to their former opinion are not prepared, in the face of the Memorandum by the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, to apply to the Government of India for permission to commence the project as a relief work.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. H. GARSTIN,
Additional Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
,, the Public Works Department.
,, the Financial Department.

Exd. A. F. Goodall.

Revenue Department

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue
Dated 6th January 1877.

Read the following
No. 268

From A. Widdeshurn Esquire
Collector of Coimbatore

To H. E. Stokes Esquire
By Secretary to the Board of
Revenue, Madras.

Sir
Learning that there is some
difficulty in finding employment for
the thousands of distressed people in the
Bellary District, I have the honor to bring
to the notice of the Board of Revenue cer-
tain Correspondence which, as Collector of
Bellary, I had with the Board and
Government, in the famine year of 1866.

6-2-5511
11-11-5511
G.O. of 1877
REVENUE.

To
THE BOARD OF REVENUE,
Secy.,
Secy.,
Secy.

Dated February, 1st.

12

Encl.

G.O. 1st February 1877, No. 477.

FEBRUARY,
Nos. 5-6.

Upper Bellary Irrigation Project.—Declining
to apply to the Government of India, for reason
stated, for permission to commence the— as a
relief work.

2. I advocated the Commencement of the upper Bellary irrigation scheme, so far as the earth excavation for the Canal, was concerned - as being suitable for famine relief, and being all marked out, it could have been commenced on.

3. It was then however uncertain that this scheme which was in the hands of the irrigation Company, would be carried out. -

4. I had many conversations with the Company's Chief Engineer Mr Gordon, on the subject - The hitch in the work, so far as the Company were concerned was that it was thought necessary that the upper Canal should irrigate 2 Crops, and for this, some gigantic upper reservoirs in Mysore were contemplated - I could never see the need of such Compensation of enterprises, - one crop water would have been sufficient to supply the town of Bellary with water, and to irrigate an extent of land, as far

as the water sufficed - and under the banks of the Canal, numerous wells could have been sunk, and by natural percolation have irrigated a considerable amount of land, - a drinkable water might have been supplied to the people, instead of their own brackish well-water - the tree-less surface of Bellary Taluk might have been improved by plantations. -

5. But as the Mysore reservoirs were held as a *fine* *Qua* how, nothing was done, and an inferior line of irrigation was carried out, above the town of Murumb, down a valley, which, I, as Collector of Cuddapah in 1860-63, noticed to be well supplied, or at least better than any other part of the adjoining districts. -

6. The difficult part of the upper Bellary scheme lay between the Darope tanks and the head of the Channel,

I walked over this ground with Lord Napier, and the Engineers of Government and the Company in 1867; trial-pit had been sunk, to show the substratum, and the floor of the Canal, there was nothing which would have deterred a Railway Engineer from all the Cutting required; I believe some of the rocky Cutting, in the 6 miles was reckoned at £ 30,000 a mile, not grinded for a railway Cutting at home, a railway is made to pay - but though it carries grain, it cannot produce it - the Canal could do both - and in America, the scheme would have been carried out long ere this, with borrowed money - I argue that the scheme would have paid, because in 1866 the people of the town were actually purchasing water to drink - The Cavalry were ordered out of the Station - The native regiments were receiving immense sums as Compensation

Station for dear food; the people of the town were seriously contemplating abandoning it, for a better situation, near the Toongabhadra River; water was valued as it never seems to have been in the Khandar valley, under the lower Irrigation - Cum - Navigation scheme, which the Ryots do not seem to care for the water, but which is to be bought by Government for their use -

7 The only objection I have heard now stated to the Upper Bellary scheme is that perhaps the Toongabhadra River will not be able to supply an additional upper Channel; there are however floods and freshes, which would have been held by the stipendary reservoirs if they had been constructed, and on those occasions, I understand water passes over the lowest

lowest. This too Ancient into the sea -
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and other tanks which could be formed
for its retention - There would have
been local storage, and use of the water,
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is produced in former arid tracts
of Country, by Canals -

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2,00,000 people obtaining relief by
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were, something like 50,000 in the
vicinity of its Chief town - how
these can execute any profitable
work - seems to be a matter of diffi-
-culty, there are too many for road
making.

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of employing multitudes - But as I, when
Collector in 1866, when I had only 6000
people in the vicinity of the Chief town
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and they could not be camped out)
and without adequate results, - advo-
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still larger number of people require
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remunerative, that should only

be considered. Many agricultural improvements are made, that return profits at distant periods. — If Bellary taluk were secured, or even a portion of it, it would be an oasis, or Land of Goshen in the time of dearth, Cattle might be saved even a partial irrigation has a marked influence in saving a district — and there is no other source of irrigation possible.

10 I would have advocated sinking wells as a relief, in 1866; but that the wells which were sunk thro' the lime stone soil, produced a white liquid, like milk, of an abominable taste as I experienced by personal trials.

11 — A difficulty about the upper project existed in 1866, which can hardly exist now, the Company had a Conception of the river, they can hardly have such now, when Government pay the

5/10 The interest of some 2 millions, sunk on a scheme, which hardly pays its working expenses —

12. In the interest of the people and of Government, I advocate the enlargement of the upper channel at Wobla poor on the Lingabadra — and leading the Canal thro' the rocky cutting of the Darope tank and thence by an excavated canal to Bellary. — At all events, it might be worth while to submit the matter with a professional opinion to the Government of India, as famine relief must be met out of Imperial resources, and the question of their application would rest with that Government.

13. Other expensive irrigation schemes have been sanctioned by Government, which are good, but have paid no interest on the Capital yet. — There is the Shringaondam ancient estimation 7 lacs, cost 10 lacs, over the Sambarapur in Timmally District, low

low down the river, and only Capable
of utilizing Surplus water of which,
owing to dry years, there has not yet
been any - once in a generation, there
is a disastrous flood such as swept away
Soolochennani's bridge at Tenmavelli,
but not a Continuous surplus. Here,
on the Contrary, instead of being at
the tail of an exhausted river, the
proposed Channel has the whole,
and first, Command of the never failing
Tongabudra river, which, in the dis-
astrous year of 1866, when the rest
of the district of Bellary, was a barren
waste - irrigated its usual expanse
of rice, and Sugar Cane Crops - so
that one, as it were, is a few miles
passed from a region of dearth,
into a land of plenty. There can be
no doubt whatever, of the irrigated
Canal proposed, paying. Whether it
pays in the first year, or even in
the fifth, or what interest it pays,
is a subordinate question -

37/2 Having a Command of water, it may
pay from the very first some divi-
dend. Irrigation works pay gradually,
as more and more land is adapted for
irrigation. In this instance, instead of
there being a line of drainage as in the
Hoondar valley, irrigated by the lower
Canal Scheme, where the Hoondar
with its affluents from the drainage
of the Kalla Mulla Hills, influences,
at least, the under ground supply,
which can be tapped by wells, and
which renders the supply of irrigation
water to the ryots of less importance
and value - it is the only possible source
of supply - no ryot, when he can
get well water at a cheap rate, by
his own labour, or rain enough
to water a dry crop, will pay Ru-
pees 6 in Cash, per acre, per crop,
to an irrigation Company in per-
petuity. In the first instance, irri-
gation is not so good for cholera,
and

and black cotton soil, as rain - and the
line of the Toongabhadra river is seen
indicated in the southwest monsoon,
by clouds following the river, and being
arrested by the hulla. Nulla Chain of
mountains at right angles to the river,
rain falls at Tumak, when not a drop
visits either Bellary or Buddapah -

14 The Superiority of the Upper Bell-
-ary project is thus shewn by its
being able to Command an utterly
unwatered tract, instead of what, as in
the Hoondar, was a fertile valley; fer-
tile because - there was water under
the surface, and a tolerable rain fell -
the finest land is waste, where neither
rain, nor irrigation, is available - but
because 2 millions have been unprofitably
sunk in a project in which the Revenue
Officers of the districts affected were
never Consulted; it does not follow, that
a more promising scheme should be
condemned - it cannot equal the
expense of the unsuccessful work of
the

the lower channel - while, (tho' with heavy
rock cutting for several miles), the Com-
mand of water is greater, and the value of
water to the land to be watered is of much
greater importance - water, like every other
necessary Commodity, being valuable
in exact proportion to its scarcity.

I have &c.
Combaton Collector } (Signed) A. Widdershoven
Office 30th December 1876 } Collector

Submitted for the Consideration of
Govt -

The Scheme known as the Upper
Bellary project has been investigated -
its success as an investment is not
proved; and under ordinary circum-
stances this wd be sufficient to warrant
hesitation in Commencing it; but in
the present Condition of the district
which renders necessary an enormous
outlay, the question whether the expen-
diture might not be more profitably
made on this matured scheme than

than an endless miles of road deserves
the serious Consideration of Govt. - of its
Suitability as a famine work there
Can be no doubt and though it might
not give an adequate return on the
outlay, its execution will not only
provide employment, but it will
alter the face of the Country, through
which it passes and will ensure it
against famine for the future to
bes nothing of its bringing a perennial
water supply to the populous town and
important military post at Bellary.
The further report on the financial
aspect of the question called for
in Board's Proceedings recorded with the
Miscellaneous G. O. dated 1st February
1896 No. 260 has not been received, but
sufficient information is available
to warrant under the present excep-
tional circumstances the Commence-
ment of the work. (True Copy and Extract)

W. D. M.

To The Secretary to Government
Revenue Department
Ag. Secretary

No.

From

Dated

Jan^y 11 1877.

FOR ORDERS.

Reurs.

The enclosed. P. 10 of the
18th of Rev. on W.
has been in letter of
the 30th ult. No 268
are circulated for the
perusal of the Members
of Govt. with the suggestion
that Colonel Mullins
note on the Upper Valley
Project may be commu-
nicated to Sir R.
Temple along with
the 18th of Rev. & the
D.O. letter of W.
Thomhill advising
its commencement.

J. H.

11/1/77

Mr. J. H. Mullins
18/1/77

18/1/77

The Govt. of Madras will
decide whether or not they
will recommend a survey

Rev. 1897-2004
No. 320
Proceedings of the Board
of Revenue

Dated 6th January 1877
Signed J. H.

Submitting for the Consider-
ation of Govt. Committee
Collected letter, bringing to
notice certain correspondence
with the Government
Collectors of Bellary regarding
certain irrigation works.

201-February 17th No. 477

No. 5

particular project - they
ought not to & cannot
delegate a matter to
H. Temple

The project in question
appears to have been
examined most carefully

but there are some
important defects in the scheme
as they present themselves
in an ordinary dry season
if any large amount is drawn
from the river & then the
delta will suffer - & this
must be taken for in
estimating the population
as a factor of irrigation
means loss of revenue as well as
crop -

Further scheme could be
completed without vast
large expenditure in
work. I am sure it is in the
our case - costly & long
lasting walls in the river

177
12

The high level which seems
detracting either as a
an independent unit
State for way of water -
I am quite sure that
Madras was an independent
just managing its own affairs
it would not have more
than work -

I think large relief works
should be such as the State
could inspect of farming
regarding the water with
of fair return - or see
local work as can be easily seen
to completion of the farming
without costly ~~expensive~~ structures
but being carrying before they
be utilized -

I should not recommend
adoption of either of these
projects

188 1/1

FOR ORDERS.

Mr. J. C. May 20. 18. of New. Mass. 2. May 17. 17.
And N. W. B. W. Sep. 18. 18. 18.
R. F. 18. 18. 18.

the ~~difficult~~ ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{Project as a Relief}
work. They are of
opinion that local
chief works of the
State should
responsible of famine
relieving the undertaker
with a certainty of
four returns of work.
a local character as to
be capable of being
carried out by Relief
bureaus in front
cost of structural work
being necessary before
they could be introduced

Der holtz
1/2/77

sent to him from 19-1-77 to 13-1-77
C 12-1-77. N^o 15-1-77.