M.R.O. 14—10,000—21-4-22.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 638	Press Mis.
341 – 42	
Dated 19 – 3 –	1861 .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 19th March 1861.

No. 341. Read the following letter from W. GREY, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India (Home Department), to J. D. BOURDILLON, Esq., Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Fort William, 28th February 1861, No. 438 :—

SIR,

I am directed to forward the accompanying copy of a Resolution this day passed by the Governor General in Council regarding the supply of Indian Cotton to England.

HOME DEPARTMENT,
The 28th February 1861.

RESOLUTION.

Supply of Indian Cotton to England.

His Excellency the Governor General in Council has had, under his consideration, the possibility of a greatly and suddenly increased demand for Indian Cotton in England, and he desires to draw the attention of each local Government within the territories of which Cotton producing and Cotton exporting Districts lie to those measures whereby the power of India to meet such increased demand for Cotton may be augmented by help of Government.

It is to be observed :—

First.—That no measure which places Government in the position of the private Capitalist, Cultivator, or Speculator, or which in any way interferes with private enterprise can be otherwise than permanently injurious in itself and detrimental to the object in view.

Therefore all attempts to stimulate cultivation or labor, by any exertion of Government authority, directly or indirectly, are out of the question.

The same objection will apply to model farms and experimental cultivation conducted by Officers of Government.

Secondly.—No measure will meet the object immediately in view unless it shall tell on the production of Cotton during the next season, and on our means of getting that season's crop to port. This limitation will exclude from present consideration such projects as Railways or Canals, which although the surest permanent means of increasing our power of export, could be made to tell to only a very limited degree on the exports of the next few seasons. Moreover the attention of Government is already directed to promote these works to the utmost extent compatible with its financial means, and even so serious a calamity as an apprehension of a short supply of Cotton in England, could hardly add to the desire of the Government of India to advance them as rapidly as possible.

The question for consideration is, what can the Government do towards facilitating an immediate increase of production and towards improving the means of bringing the produce to Port.

As to increasing Production.

The solution of questions connected with the tenure of land, and with the law regarding contracts for the delivery of agricultural produce, which are now under the consideration of Government, may ultimately produce a very considerable effect on the investment of European Capital in the Cotton Districts, but the result could not be immediate. More probably an immediate increase of the coming crop of Cotton will depend on the rapidity with which information regarding the demand and prices in England can be communicated to the producers in the Cotton Districts, and on the removal of all impediments to intimate and rapid communication between those who grow or collect the Cotton in the interior, and the Merchants who export it from the port of shipment. Directly and indirectly the Government may do something to promote these objects ; especially if Agents of the Mercantile Community of our Ports will visit the Cotton producing Districts, and do all that may be effected by personal intercourse to reduce the number of hands through which the produce must pass between the place of produc-

tion and the place of shipment. There is also much valuable statistical information regarding the extent of Cotton cultivation which it may be in the power of the Government Officers to furnish from the public records, or to verify when obtained through other means.

The operations in the interior, of the capitalists at our seaport towns may be facilitated by affording them the aid of the Government Treasury in their banking arrangements in those parts of the country where as yet no private Banks have been established. The Agents of respectable Firms at the Presidency Towns might be permitted, under certain rules, to have their bills on the Presidency cashed at the Government Treasuries, paying no more premium than the actual cost of conveying the coin. This, without entailing expense on Government, might often prove a convenience to the Merchants.

As to improving the means of bringing the produce to Port.

It is by facilitating existing means of communication, even though it be in a rough way, that Government can best aid the Merchant promptly without exceeding its legitimate functions.

Projects for bridged and metalled roads are not practicable within the next year or eighteen months; but there is a great extent of country capable of producing Cotton, which is now not easily accessible to ordinary country carts, even during the fair season; and probably it is by improving the present country cart and pack bullock tracks, and thus extending the mileage over which an ordinary load of Cotton may be conveyed at a rate of 2½ or three miles per hour, that the export of the next season's crop may be most effectually aided.

In this view the Governor General in Council requests that each local Government will at once take measures to have the lines of traffic between their Cotton producing Districts and the port of shipment, whether on sea or river, examined and reported on by a competent Officer. This Officer should note, in general terms, the extent and probable cost of any improvements required to bring the existing country cart tracks up to the standard just described. For this execution of the improvements the Government should select the nearest executive authority as the one to be charged with the work; and where there is no such authority at hand, a special agency should be employed for the purpose; the only conditions being that the work to be undertaken should be capable of immediate execution.

For such purposes Officers of high scientific attainments as Engineers are not needed. An Officer of judgment and energy, with a capacity for rapidly estimating the probable cost of the very simple works required, will be almost as useful as an accomplished Engineer. In the event of any expenditure being required, which it is beyond the power of the local Government to sanction, application should be made to the Government of India for a special grant.

It would be very desirable that the Officers employed to examine and report should be accompanied each by a member of whatever commercial community may be most interested in the produce of the district, who might observe and report on any obstacles other than physical which may appear to impede the Cotton trade. The combined report of two such gentlemen, if well selected, would furnish information of considerable practical value regarding any provision in which they might be employed.

The Government of India will be prepared to bear the charge of the travelling expenses of any gentlemen who might be deputed by commercial communities to accompany its Officers.

It is not intended to discourage, on the part of those who may be engaged as above described, suggestions of any extensive or costly work which may promise to subserve, in a lasting and more permanent manner, the great object in view, even though it may not admit of speedy execution, or be within the means of Government to sanction immediately.

Ordered, that a copy of this Resolution be communicated to the Governments of Madras and Bombay; to the Lieutenant Governors of Bengal, the North-Western Provinces, and the Punjab; to the Commissioners of Pegu, Nagpore, and Mysore; and to the Resident at Hyderabad.

FROM

No. 438.

W. GREY, ESQUIRE,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.

To

The Secy to Govt of Fort St. Geo

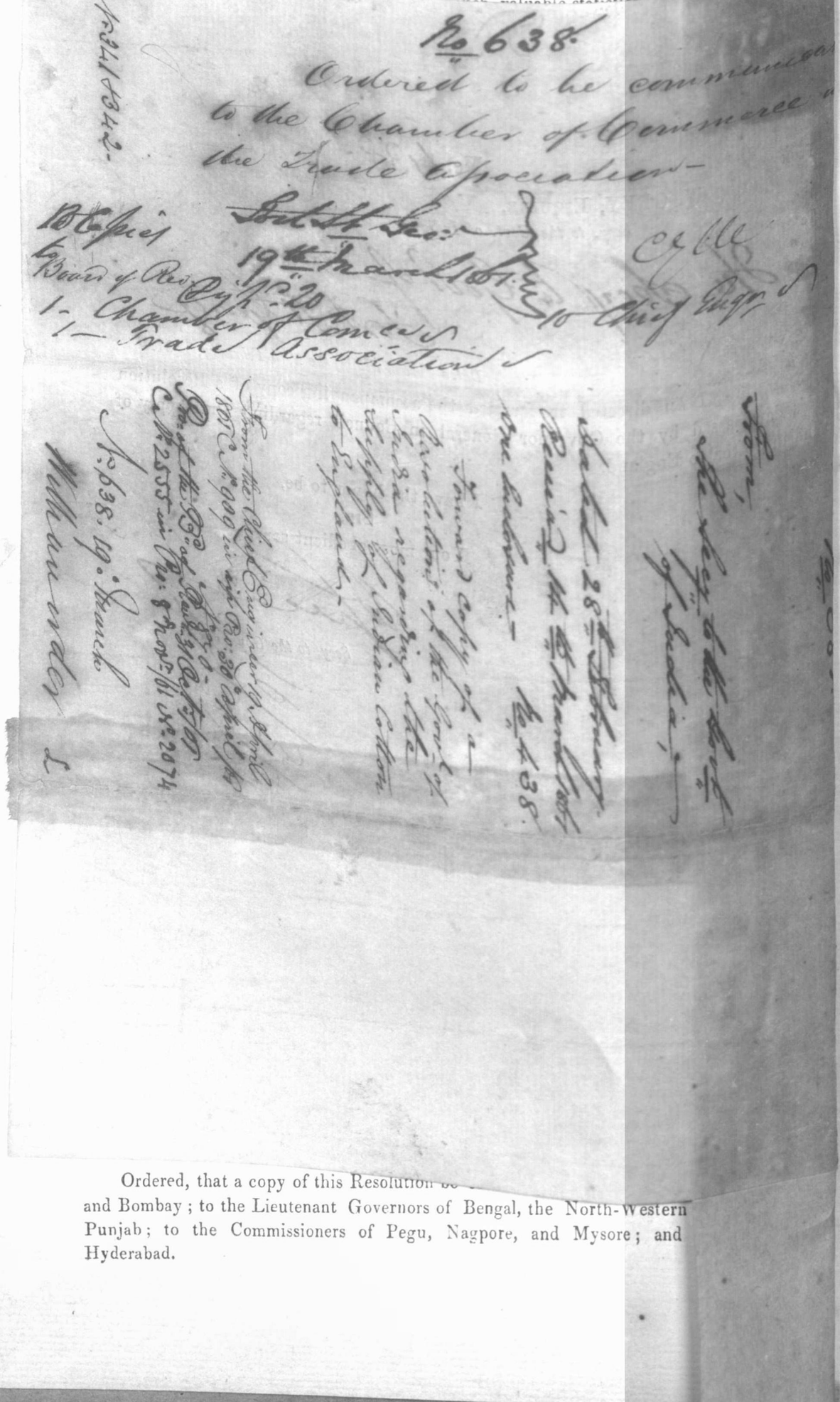
SIR,

Dated Fort William, the 28th February, 1861.

HOME DEPT. I AM directed to forward the accompanying copy of a Resolution this day passed by the Governor General in Council regarding the supply of Indian Cotton to England.

I have the honor to be,
SIR,
Your most obedient servant,

Secy. to the Govt. of India.



Ordered, that a copy of this Resolution be … and Bombay; to the Lieutenant Governors of Bengal, the North-Western Punjab; to the Commissioners of Pegu, Nagpore, and Mysore; and Hyderabad.

Ordered further, that the local Governments and Administrations be requested to communicate a copy of the Resolution to the commercial communities at their chief Towns, through the Chambers of Commerce, or otherwise; with an invitation of any suggestions which may occur to those practically interested, and which may aid more effectually to attain the great national object in view.

(Signed) W. GREY,
Secretary to the Government of India.

No. 342. ORDER THEREON, 19th March 1861, No. 638.

Ordered to be communicated to the Chamber of Commerce and the Trade Association.

(Signed) C. G. MASTER,
Deputy Secretary to Government.