M.R.O. 1—80,000—16-10-22.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 799 Press Mis.

584-585

Dated 22 March 1879

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 584. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 22nd December 1868, No. 8,998 :—

Read the following letter from the Collector of Bellary, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Bellary, 3rd November 1868, No. 270.

1. The channels taken off the Toongabudra river in this district require to be annually cleared of silt, and as cultivation is carried on under them almost without cessation, it requires a little arrangement to fix the time when they shall be closed for clearance, so as to interfere as little as possible with the interests of the ryots.

2. Owing to the want of a little management of this sort last Fusly, a number of ryots, under the Rampoor Channel, in the Adony Talook, were prevented from cultivating their second crop, and, in order that this might not occur again, I determined this Fusly, in consultation with the Superintending Engineer, to fix certain dates for the closing and re-opening of the channels, and have endeavoured, as the Board will see from the enclosed correspondence, to meet the wishes of that officer in every respect so far as the interests of the ryots and the safety of the public revenue would allow; but as, after a lengthened correspondence, Major Moberly has taken up a line which, if he is allowed to pursue it, must either seriously affect the second crop cultivation, or result in an unseemly collision between his department and mine. I am reluctantly compelled to submit the matter for the consideration of the Board of Revenue.

3. My object has been on the one hand to take away any ground of complaint from the ryots, and on the other, to afford every facility to the Officers of the Department of Public Works in carrying out the work. In order to do this, I ascertained, through the Tahsildars and Division Officers, the earliest dates on which the channels could be closed for clearance, and the utmost period for which they could remain closed without injury to the crops. A list of these dates I forwarded to the Superintending Engineer for his perusal, and such remarks as he might wish to offer; and though, with one or two exceptions, he approved of the dates fixed for the closing of the channels, and admitted that sufficient time for the work had been allowed, he declined to guarantee that it should be completed within the period specified, and at the same time refused to recognize that I had any authority to order the water to be let down, even though the crops might be perishing for want of it. To admit this, would be to place the interests of the people and the revenue of the State at the mercy of the Supervisors in charge of Ranges, whilst at the same time the head of the department washes his hands of all responsibility with reference to the consequences of delay on their part.

4. I am really unable to understand why, after a lengthened correspondence and frequent personal communication on the subject, Major Moberly has taken up this position. It must be obvious to him that irrigated crops cannot but fail if the water-supply is withheld beyond a certain time, and that if the work of clearance cannot be completed within that time, water must be let down whilst it is still incomplete; neither can I understand why, as this clearance is done every year, he should have any difficulty in determining how long each channel ought to take;

nor again can I consider the arguments advanced by him in the latter part of paragraph 2 of his letter, No. 2,704, of the 27th October, against the admission of water into the channels whilst under clearance, as entitled to any weight, when put against the magnitude of the interests involved, if it is not admitted. It is, I have no doubt, inconvenient to have to stop in the middle of a work, but what is this compared to the failure of the greatest portion of the second crop.

5. In paragraph 3 of his letter quoted above, Major Moberly expresses a wish to make over the clearance of these channels to the Revenue Department. But I have far too much work of my own to be able to take up that which legitimately belongs to the department over which he presides, and which, so far as professional skill is concerned, his subordinates can execute far better than mine. I have no wish to interfere with them departmentally, any more than as a Magistrate I do with the Police, but where public interests are concerned, I, as the Chief Administrative Officer, do claim to have a controlling voice.

6. With reference to the concluding part of paragraph 3 of Major Moberly's letter referred to, where he asserts that a transfer of the channels from his department "would be directly contrary to the wishes of the villagers dependent thereon," I would ask the Board's attention to the following extract from Mr. Kelsall's Report on the Public Works, in the Division over which he formerly presided: he says, "Paragraph 6. With reference to the Toongabudra chan-"nels on which so much of the cultivation of the Hospett Taluk depends, "I have only to remark on the length of time they are kept dry while "being cleaned in the early part of the year. This year they were dry for six "weeks, and there were many complaints. The Public Works Department "complained they could not get a sufficiency of coolies, but this was not likely, for "I understand they only offered 3 Annas per day, while any able-bodied cooly "could earn Annas 6, per day. Major Palmer, to whom I pointed this out, informs "me that the grant for the clearance of the channels is a fixed sum (I think "Rupees 16,000), and that if he pays higher rates, the number of coolies he will "be able to entertain will be insufficient. If the grant is now, owing to the "increase in the rates of labor, insufficient, application should be made for an "increase. I would also suggest that, if fewer coolies than are required are forth-"coming, only two or three of the channels should be cleaned at a time. The "present course is to cut off the supply of water from all, and do more or less work "according to the number of coolies available. It would surely be a better plan "to do one thoroughly and go on to the next, than to do bits to each, and so keep "the channels dry for an indefinite period. The attitude at present assumed by "the Department Public Works is something like this. They shut off the water, "and then inform the village heads and ryots: (We want a sufficient number of "coolies to clean them, it is true, we only can afford half of what the men could "get elsewhere; but we must have the men, and it is your interest to provide "them, for till the channels are cleaned, no water will be let in.) The village heads "and influential people manage somehow or other to provide people; but I fear "not a little "moral pressure," not to say oppression, is needed. It is very well "to point but that it is for the benefit of the ryots that the channels should be soon

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
22nd March 1869.

"open, but it is not so for the benefit of the coolies who have to do a day's work for "half a day's hire. If the coolies do not do this, the village heads and ryots must "pay them, and it will be better to collect the money in a regular way. But I do "not think this at all likely; I think it far more probable that as many coolies as "can be pressed, are sent to labor for whatever the Department Public Works will "give them."

7. I have to apologize for this somewhat lengthy letter, but I wished to lay the matter in detail before the Board, having unfortunately failed in my endeavours to put it on a satisfactory footing without reference to them.

ENCLOSURE No. 1—Correspondence.

THE Board resolved to lay this correspondence before Government, and urge very strongly that, as proposed by the Collector, a limited and stated period should be prescribed for the closing of the channels. The periods proposed by the Collector are admitted to be sufficient. If this course be not adopted, loss to the State in the way of remissions, and still greater loss to the ryots, must ensue, and in a district like Bellary, it is of the utmost importance that the productive powers of the small existing area of irrigated land should not be diminished. It is unnecessary to observe, that if the latitude claimed by Major Moberly is conceded, a very undesirable opening is afforded to the subordinate employés of the department to extract illicit offerings from the ryots by threatening to keep the channels closed.

2. The Government levy a high assessment for water, and are bound to fulfil their part of the contract with the ryots.

3. If the present rates of hire are insufficient, the Board cannot suppose that Government will object to raising them, or would approve of Major Moberly's method of practically forcing labor which, as the Collector points out, really falls on the coolies.

No. 585. ORDER THEREON, 22nd March 1869, No. 799.

Irrigation, No. 14.

1. The Government concur in the views expressed by the Board of Revenue, and resolve to direct that limited and stated periods shall be prescribed for closing the channels under reference.

2. The details of the arrangement must be settled by the Collector and Superintending Engineer in concert with each other, and the Right Honorable the Governor in Council must impress upon these officers, that if the public service is to be efficiently conducted, it is essential that the two Departments over which they respectively preside shall work in perfect harmony with each other. Major Moberly will understand that it is for Mr. Sullivan, as the administrative revenue officer of the district, to determine at what periods the water, upon which the revenue for which he is responsible so largely depends, can with the least inconvenience be dispensed with, and Mr. Sullivan will, no doubt, bear in mind that

unless on a pressing emergency it is not his province to make requisitions on the Superintending Engineer's subordinates, without the previous consent of that officer.

3. The matter must be carefully arranged and clearly determined beforehand by the Collector and Superintending Engineer, and the subordinate officers of both departments must be held strictly responsible that the orders which may be issued are exactly carried out.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) R. A. DALYELL,
Acting Secretary to Government.

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

Exd. G. A. Turton.

R. D.

№ 799.

Proceedings of the Madras Government
Under date the 22nd March 1869.

Read the following
Proc. of the Board of Revenue

Submitting correspondence regarding Period to be fixed for closing of Channels taken off the Tungabudra River. } R. 22nd Decr 1868, № 8998

Wou. R.

R. P.

1. The Government concur in the views expressed by the Board of Revenue, and resolve to direct that limited and stated periods shall be prescribed for closing the channels under reference.

2. The details of the arrangement must be settled by the Collector

Govt. of Madras
REVENUE.
To
THE BOARD OF REVENUE
No. 799 dated 22nd March 1869
Dated Board's Proc.
Read
G. O. 22nd March 1869 No. 799
MADRAS.
Nos. 554-585.
Correspondence Channels in Bellary District.
—Passing orders on the subject of closing them at stated periods, with the view of draining silt.
Wou R.
22-3-69

or Superintending Engineer in concert with each other, and His Excellency in Council must impress upon these officers, that if the public service is to be efficiently conducted, it is essential that the two Departments over which they respectively preside shall work in perfect harmony with each other. Major Moberly (must) understand that it is for Mr Sullivan as the administrative personage officer of the District to determine at what periods the water, upon which the revenue for which he is responsible to largely depends, can best be dispensed with, and Mr Sullivan (must) bear in mind that it is not his province to issue orders to the Superintending Engineer's subordinates, unless with the previous consent of that Officer.

3. The matter must be carefully arranged and clearly determined beforehand by the Collr and Supt Engineer, and the subordinate Officers of both Departments must be held strictly responsible that the orders which may be issued are exactly carried out.

Power of Attorney
Mr Clarence Talbot
of Jamaica in
favour of Betty
Duet —

Certified
Let the Power of
Attorney be filed
before signature